

Mister Georges Andrew Anderson's speech

Mr. Chairman and fellow countrymen,

It is with great pleasure that I find myself here in France. As you probably already know our President Woodrow Wilson signed the 28th June 1919 the Treaty of Versailles which ends the state of war between Germany and the Allied Powers. The World War is officially over and peace is restored to the world.

Do not consider this treaty of peace as merely an indictment. Yet it is a very severe settlement with Germany. Indeed with the article 231, it affirms the entire responsibility of Germany and its allies for causing the war and all the loss and damages to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected to. This treaty also punishes Germany on a military aspect with reducing its army, and on a territory aspect with giving Lorraine's region to France, all Germany's colonies to France and Britain as mandates, and Polish Corridor between East Germany and East Prussia to Poland. Finally, it punishes Germany on an economic aspect because Germany has to pay reparations. But those punishments are absolutely necessary in order that no other nation may ever plot such a thing against humanity and civilization. Moreover these sentences are mitigated by the article 232 because it shows our awareness about the difficulties for Germany to pay all the reparations, so this treaty remains flexible.

But the treaty is so much more than that. It is not merely a settlement with Germany; it is a readjustment of those great wrongs which underlie the whole structure of our society. It is a people's treaty, which accomplishes the liberation of men who never could have liberated themselves. The men who sat around that table in Paris knew that the time had come when the people were no longer going to consent to live under masters, but were going to live the lives that they chose themselves, to live under such governments as they chose themselves to erect. Not only did we settle that fundamental principle but also we added a great international charter for the rights of labour with the part XIII of the treaty, which regulates labour conditions for the first time in History.

Obviously, this treaty isn't completely in agreement with all the Wilson's ideas. As you probably heard, some points will be hard to apply and it might lead to a discontent in the defeated countries. Truly the treaty could have been perfected but we had to make a decision to guarantee the peace in the world.

But despite of these flaws, we succeeded in adding the Covenant of the League of Nations. This League is the first worldwide intergovernmental organisation whose principal mission is to maintain world peace. The membership of this great League is going to include all the great fighting nations of the world, as well as the weak ones. It is not going to include Germany yet, but for the time being Germany is not a great fighting country. And all these members are united by the solemn promise to one another that they will never use their power against one another for aggression; that they never will impair the territorial integrity of a neighbour; that they never will interfere with the political independence of a neighbour; that they will abide by the principle that great populations are entitled to determine their own destiny and

that they will not interfere with that destiny; no matter what differences arise amongst them.

This great League of Nation is established thanks to the article 10 which provides that every member of the league covenants to respect and preserve the territorial integrity and existing political independence of every other member of the league as against external aggression. Following article 10 is article 11, which makes it the right of any member of the League at any time to call attention to anything, anywhere, that is likely to disturb the peace of the world or the good understanding between nations upon which the peace of the world depends.

Finally this treaty has imperfections and doesn't totally respect Wilson's points. But that's because it is the result of a common work with countries which do not share the same values. And, for the first time in History, the European people had a say. It will achieve a new world, stronger and more united than before. And this is partly thanks to the American ideas. So let us accept what America has always fought for, and accept it with pride that America showed the way and made the proposal of this League of Nations which will unite our world for a better future.

Thank you gentlemen for your attention, and I hope that I convinced you that with this treaty, more doors were opened than shut.