

Note also the preferred position of the Council Members. If one of them is party to a dispute with Poland, then the machinery of the League is set in motion. But if not, if for instance, the dispute were between Poland and Germany, then the remedy depends upon whether a Council Member takes up Germany's cause.

It is truly a complete change in the organization of the Society of Nations. To visualize it requires imagination and hopefulness. But the alternative is despair.

THEODORE S. WOOLSEY.

#### THE MANDATE OVER ARMENIA

President Wilson, on May 24th, appealed to Congress to authorize the United States to undertake a mandate over Armenia in response to the request of the Supreme Council at its meeting in San Remo. The President indicated at the same time that he had agreed to delimit the boundaries of Armenia within the Turkish Vilayets of Van, Bitlis, Trebizond, and Erzerum. It should be observed that both requests emanated from the Supreme Council and not from the League of Nations under whose control all mandates are to be placed.

On May 29th, after a brief and somewhat partisan debate, the United States Senate passed the following concurrent resolution declining to accede to President Wilson's appeal:

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the Congress hereby respectfully declines to grant to the Executive the power to accept a mandate over Armenia as requested in the message of the President dated May 24, 1920.

No formal reasons were adduced for this action, though the debate brought out certain fundamental objections. These objections were based for the most part on the special report submitted by Major-General James G. Harbord, head of the American Military Mission to Armenia appointed by President Wilson.

While not making any specific recommendations, this report stressed certain difficulties in the way of undertaking a mandate over Armenia. The military problem of preserving internal order and guarding against external aggression from troublesome neighbors was presented as being grave in character. The political complications bound to result from interjecting the United States into the mael-

strom of the Eastern Question for a generation or more were pointed out. And the financial burden of a mandate was estimated at the high figure of over seven hundred and fifty-six million dollars for the first five years.

These objections seemed to weigh heavily in the minds of the Senators opposed to the mandate, though, as a matter of fact, General Harbord's observations applied not to this specific proposal for a mandate over a lesser Armenia, but to the idea of one large mandate involving the whole of Anatolia, Constantinople and European Turkey, as well as Transcaucasian Armenia.

Ignoring undoubted considerations of a partisan nature, it would seem evident that the hostility of Congress toward this mandate is based in part on a genuine distrust of the League of Nations and of all the responsibilities implied in its membership as illustrated by this proposal that the United States should administer Armenia.

The practical problem presented by this momentous proposal is unquestionably whether the United States should be made an active party to the Eastern Question. That the Eastern Question is very much alive is evidenced by the open rivalries of the European Powers for a favored position in the Near East. Under the guise of "mandates," Great Britain, France, Italy and Greece are seeking valuable additions of territory.

The attitude of Great Britain calls for especial comment. In addition to Palestine and Mesopotamia, not to include spheres of influence in Arabia and Persia, Great Britain has actually occupied Constantinople, with the nominal though reluctant coöperation of her allies, and has apparently settled down by the Bosphorus for an indefinite stay.

Historical candor requires that attention should be drawn to the fact that by the Treaty of Berlin in 1880, Great Britain assumed the rôle of protector of the Armenians and took over the Island of Cyprus as a gage for the introduction of reforms in Armenia by the Porte. Sultan Abdul Hamid was not slow to realize that the Armenians were in error in believing that they could count on valiant support in their aspirations for social and political amelioration. Previous to 1880, bad as was the lot of all the misgoverned subjects of the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians had existed in relative quiet without grave molestation from the Turks. The embitterment of relations between the two races, and the terrible massacres which

occurred in 1895 and 1896, and which were the precursors of the general policy of extermination adopted later by the Young Turks, must be attributed in the main to the intrusive and fruitless friendship of Great Britain for the Armenians. When one contemplates the enormous sacrifices made by Great Britain in the Great War, he is tempted to excuse her unwillingness to assume the burden of administering Armenia. But against this must be set the fact that Great Britain seems quite willing to assume new burdens in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Constantinople, Persia, and elsewhere where material advantages are promising.

The chief concern of the European Powers is, apparently, not for the welfare of the oppressed nationalities of the Near East, but the attainment of selfish materialistic ends. And having reached a fairly satisfactory division of territory, they now appeal to the United States to accept the thorniest and the most undesirable task of caring for the grossly neglected and unloved Armenians.

These unpleasant facts should be borne in mind when Americans are accused of selfish indifference toward the Armenians. One must ask in all fairness why public opinion in Great Britain has not been aroused to a keener sense of the obligations of honor to care for these most unfortunate people.

Under all these circumstances it is not at all strange that the American people should be most reluctant to become acutely embroiled in the Eastern Question by accepting so onerous a burden as the mandate over Armenia. And yet the hearts of the American people have been deeply touched by the tragic lot of these unhappy people, who even now—a miserable remnant—are unprotected from utter annihilation at the hands of the Turks, the Kurds, and their Tartar neighbors in Azerbaijan. Very large contributions have been made for purposes of relief in the Near East, and many heroic Americans in various capacities are devoting themselves under trying and dangerous conditions to the task of bringing immediate help and hope to these despairing people.

This sympathy for the Armenians was expressed in the Senate debate by Senator Hitchcock in an alternative proposal to the effect that the Armenian Republic should be aided and encouraged in its efforts to raise funds and obtain valued moral support of various kinds. This proposition is not without considerable merit, though it received slight consideration at the hands of the Senate. The moral

support of the American Government and of the whole American people might result in the enlistment of a large number of men and women of tested leadership, and of high devotion and courage to go to Armenia and undertake the colossal, though inspiring, task of helping to bring order out of chaos, and hope out of black despair.

The larger problem of the obligations of the whole family of nations toward peoples and nations in a backward stage of development is vividly epitomized by the question of a mandate for Armenia. The United States has been compelled to acknowledge the existence of such practical problems in the cases of Haiti and Santo Domingo, where American officials and soldiers are playing the high rôle so aptly described by President Wilson as that of "big brother." There are many such situations the world over, and suffering Armenia is surely the most poignant. It may be asserted with considerable force that the United States has its own vast obligations on this Continent, not to speak of its duty toward the Filipinos, and that we cannot play the part of "constable to all creation." It may fairly be said that if Europe is callously indifferent to the needs and the rights of the Armenians, there is no obligation on us to undertake Europe's own peculiar task.

The fact remains, however, that after the close of a terrible war which we hoped might establish the rights of all nations and lay the secure foundations of international law, the world seems to stand indifferent to the rights of an ancient race still in bondage.

Whatever justification there may be for this refusal to undertake a mandate over Armenia, it is doubtful whether the American people can remain passive and permit this nation to be completely extirpated while the rest of the world, in cynical devotion to selfish aims, fails to take the necessary steps to avert so unspeakable a catastrophe. International good citizenship would seem to require that the United States should assert its moral leadership in behalf of the fundamental rights of nations:

PHILIP MARSHALL BROWN.