

To the American people

To the American People: FROM THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

A STUPENDOUS UNDERTAKING

A DECADE has passed since the World War ended and the nations started on their stupendous task of organizing the world for general international justice, security, goodwill and peace. On the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the League of Nations a review of the world's achievements in this direction is fitting.

THE SITUATION TEN YEARS AGO

The war ended November 11, 1918. Germany and Austria crushed and starving, were prostrate. Great Britain, France and Italy, flushed with victory and making severe demands, were staggering and reeling under incredible financial burdens and general disruption of normal life. Russia, torn by the Bolshevik revolution, had cast down and trampled with fierce vindictiveness on her imperial family and on all associated with them and was preaching and plotting similar proletariats revolutions in every land.

Four years of incredible human slaughter and destruction had brought down on the nations involved in that war, national and personal tragedies and suffering beyond imagination. Four autocracies had crumbled to the dust and perished forever. Famine and disease stalked abroad in every land. Ruined industries and unemployment were universal. Credit was almost gone and money almost valueless. Millions of the nations best workers had miserably perished. Millions of helpless widows, orphans and war cripples were appealing piteously for help.

THE BIRTH OF THE LEAGUE

Such in briefest outline was Europe's condition when the League of Nations was born. It had few friends. Many belittled it and derided its program. It started without experience and without precedents. It came into being through the dream of a few idealists who held that the old world order was bankrupt; that, if continued, it would bring civilized nations to complete destruction; that a new world order must take its place; that the war system must give way to a peace system in which justice, security, freedom and peace must be assured to each by the united wisdom, goodwill and power of all.

GROWTH IN ORGANIZATION AND INFLUENCE

Little by little the leaders of the League thought out and set up its organization, defined its policies, clarified its programs and brought together for conferences and common action widening circles of influential representatives from the nations. Little by little the sanity of its plans and the value of its achievements commended themselves to the judgments of the nations. Today, the annual Assembly is the world's major political gathering. There annually during September are found at Geneva responsible statesmen of every State member of the League, coming from six continents. There gather hundreds of representatives of the press to report to their peoples the discussions and decisions of vital world interests. More and more the hope of the nations centers on the League for understanding, justice, security and peace.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The League's positive achievements during the decade are very important. In the prevention of ravaging epidemics, famine and disease; in the repatriation of war prisoners by the hundred thousand; in saving Austria and Hungary from complete dissolution; in creating the Permanent Court of International Justice; in insisting on arbitration and conciliation as the only legitimate methods for settling international disputes; in continuous study of the problem of armaments and their reduction; in preventing a number of incipient wars; in dealing with many ominous issues created by the Treaty of Versailles; in promoting accord and cooperation between France and Germany; in the Locarno Treaties; in the admission of Germany into the League, giving her a permanent seat on the Council; in furnishing the favorable background and atmosphere for settling, for the present at least, the intricate and well-nigh insoluble problem of reparations; and in many other procedures too numerous to mention, the League has steadily been helping the world forward toward permanent peace.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE LEAGUE

During these years the United States has not been a member of the League. Many Americans feared that membership might involve us in the engtangling mesh of Europe's nationalistic struggles. Our Government has, however, increasingly cooperated with the humanitarian activities of the League and has participated in practically all its significant committees and committees and commissions. American citizens have taken distinguished parts in the League Secretariat, in the World Court, in the League's Committees and in certain administrative positions.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE UNITED STATES

The United States has participated in two significant contributions toward world peace during the decade—the Washington Conference on Limitation of Armaments and the General Treaty for the Renunciation of War, now effective for 57 nations including Soviet Russia, Mexico and Turkey.

THE WORLD COURT

Upon the recommendation of two Presidents of the United States, the Senate has authorized American adherence to the World Court upon certain expressed conditions. The difficulties in the way of acceptance of these conditions by the nations signatory to the Court Protocol and Statute, would certainly seem to have been removed by an agreement negotiated in Geneva a few months ago. With President Hoover's authority the signature of the United States was affixed to the Protocols on December 9, 1929, and prompt ratification by the United States Senate is anticipated.

IS PEACE NOW PERMANENT?

The world has had peace for a decade. But is it permanent? What another world war would mean is clear to all thoughtful men—“the cemetery of civilization.” In this age of democracy whether we are to have enduring peace or not depends on the peoples. If the peoples and governments of Great Britain, France and Germany during the coming decades take in earnest the Covenant of the League of Nations, and if these peoples and governments, together with the people and government of the United States, have signed the Pact of Paris in good faith, the danger of another world war is surely past. With these nations insistent for themselves and for all, that international disputes shall be settled only by peaceful means, a world war is not easy to conceive.

THE DECISION RESTS WITH THE PEOPLE

For this reason the Committee on the Tenth Anniversary of the League of Nations has issued this Message. We appeal to all lovers of world justice and peace to study and understand what has been accomplished during the decade in laying the foundations for world peace. The next ten years will show whether the World's Palace of Peace is really being built thereon or whether the opportunity and duty that confront this generation are being neglected.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

We rejoice in the ideals and achievements of the League of Nations and in the high idealism of the Pact of Paris for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. As the nations enter on the second decade, we call upon all lovers of justice and peace everywhere to unite their forces in working for world peace. There are enough of us to secure it if we will all work together. We

hope and believe that these great instruments of justice and peace are harbingers of a new era in human history—an era free from tragedies, hatreds and cruel wrongs of war, an era glorious with the happiness and prosperity of a brotherly humanity. The destiny of mankind depends on what this generation does with the Covenant and the Pact.

A CALL TO ACTION

Shall we not all unite in clothing the high ideals and glorious visions of the Covenant and the Pact with action and in carrying them forward to triumphant achievement?

COMMITTEE ON THE MESSAGE

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