

transportation to aid or injure special business concerns; and other unfair trade practices.

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Questions

1. What reforms does the platform propose to improve the functioning of American democracy?
2. How does the platform seem to define economic freedom?

CHAPTER 19

Safe for Democracy: The United States and World War I, 1916–1920

120. Woodrow Wilson, A World "Safe for Democracy" (1917)

Source: *65th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Document No. 5.*

More than any other individual in the early twentieth century, President Woodrow Wilson articulated a new vision of America's relationship to the rest of the world. His foreign policy, called by historians "liberal internationalism," rested on the conviction that economic and political progress went hand in hand, and that it was the job of the United States to promote both free markets and political democracy. He came to see World War I as a great opportunity to promote these goals.

Although Wilson declared American neutrality when the war began in Europe in 1914 and ran for reelection in 1916 pledging to keep the United States out of the war, Germany's resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare early in 1917, including the targeting of American ships transporting goods to England, convinced Wilson that the United States must enter the war. On April 2, 1917, he called on Congress for a declaration of war against Germany. His speech promised that victory would lead to a new world order based on "peace and justice" among the "free and

self-governing peoples of the world." In his most celebrated sentence, he declared, "the world must be made safe for democracy."

OUR OBJECT . . . is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power and to set up among the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples; and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people. We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling toward them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools.

Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor states with spics or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions. Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be, from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light

only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion. . . . Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own. . . .

The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.

Questions

1. What changes in the relationship between the United States and the rest of the world does Wilson foresee emerging from World War I?
2. Why does Wilson believe that autocratic governments, not democratic ones, are the cause of wars?

121. A Critique of the Versailles Peace Conference (1919)

Source: *Mao Zedong: "So much for national self-determination!" from Mao's Road to Power Revolutionary Writings, 1912-1949, Volume 1: The Pre-Marxist Period, 1912-1920, ed. Stuart R. Schram (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1991), p. 337. Translation copyright © 1992 by The John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research. Reprinted with permission of M. E. Sharpe, Inc.*