

GREEN
Paris,
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Secretary of State
Washington.

Number 109, November 15, midnight.

Following are remarks made by the French Foreign Office on
previous peace conferences:

"ONE

The offices of President and Secretary are both of great
importance and appertain invariably to the power where the pleni-
potentiaries are assembled.

NOTE: President, yes
Secretary ?

TWO

The plenipotentiaries for each power are few in number in
order to facilitate negotiations, avoid lengthy discussions and
diversion of views between delegates of the same power and indis-
cretions.

THREE

The representatives of the states are either the Chancellor
or Prime Minister or the Minister of Foreign Affairs."

NOTE: I do not understand this.

Following is scheme of procedure as suggested by French
Foreign Office:

" SCHEME OF PROCEDURE

A. The Peace Congress is composed of representatives of the belligerent powers which have taken actual part in the war. Exceptionally other powers may be convened in so far as questions interesting them directly may be made the subject of debates there at and only in regard to such questions.

NOTE: Japan? Brazil? Portugal?

B. The powers shall be exclusively represented at the Congress by plenipotentiary delegates to the maximum number of three, the latter may be accompanied by technical counsellors.

NOTE: Does this mean at the sittings? If so, is there no limit as to numbers?

I favor 5 commissioners and a limit on advisers.

C. The order of precedence among the members of the Congress is the French alphabetical order of the powers (rule consecrated by custom).

NOTE: Approved.

D. The Congress shall be opened under the provisional presidency of the President of the Council of Ministers of the country where it is sitting, the verification of the powers of the members of the Congress shall be proceeded with immediately by a committee composed of the first plenipotentiary of one of the Allied or Associated powers and of the first plenipotentiary of one of the adverse powers.

NOTE: Approved.

E. Following the verification of the powers of the members the Congress shall nominate its permanent President and two vice Presidents.

Note: Shall not the Government where the meeting is held name the President?
How are the vice-Presidents to be named?

F. A secretarial bureau designated of the members of Congress shall be presented to the latter's approval by the President who shall assume control and responsibility thereof. The office of this bureau shall be to establish the protocol of the sitting, to file the archives and provide the administrative organization of the Congress and generally assume the regular and punctual working of the services entrusted to it.

The chief of this bureau will be given the guardianship and responsibility of the protocols and archives of the Congress

which shall always be accessible to the members thereof.

NOTE: Approved.

G. The press reports of the progress of the Congress shall be assured daily, official communiques prepared by the Secretariat and published each day at the same hour. The members of the Congress undertake formally not to give out any other communications concerning the operations of the Congress.

NOTE: General approval, provided there is opportunity for complaint and change in the event it is not satisfactory.

H. The French language is recognized as the official language for the deliberations and the acts of the Congress. The members thereof are free to present their remarks or verbal communications in any language they may choose subject to their giving out immediately a French translation thereof.

NOTE: I think that this is probably necessary, provided English as well as French stenographers report the oral statements and oral French statements are put at once into English. Personally I favor both French and English be declared official languages.

I. All documents destined to be included in the protocols shall be written out and ready by the members of the Congress who shall have had the initiative thereof; when not made out in French they shall be accompanied by a translation; no proposition can be presented to the Congress otherwise than by one of the plenipotentiaries and on behalf of the power represented by him.

NOTE: Generally approved.

J. The members who may be desirous of submitting propositions must do so by writing and deposit same at the previous sitting in order to facilitate discussion thereof, except where amendments are concerned and not material propositions.

NOTE: I think that the rule should be to deposit at a previous meeting or at least 48 hours before a sitting with Secretary who shall deliver copies to all delegates 24 hours before sitting.

K. Petitions, missions, remarks or documents addressed to the congress by persons other than the plenipotentiaries shall be received, classified and summarized by the Secretary who shall deposit same in the archives of the Congress.

NOTE: Rules as to printing and distributing should be made.

L. The discussion of questions will be preceded by a first and second reading in order to establish first, the agreement upon the principles, and subsequently, allow the definition of details.

NOTE: I do not understand this.

M. Subject to the acceptance of the Congress, the plenipotentiaries are entitled to authorize their technical counsellors to present directly technical explanations upon any particular question when such explanations may be deemed expedient. The technical; any particular question may be entrusted by the Congress to a committee composed of technical advisers of the plenipotentiaries charged with the mission of presenting a report to the Congress and of proposing solutions.

NOTE: Approved.

N. All the decisions of the Congress shall be taken unanimously, except in regard to question of, unless in the second the minority should put on record a formal protestation.

NOTE: Query

O. The protocol drawn up by the secretarial bureau shall be printed and distributed as provisional agreement proofs to the plenipotentiaries; this previous communication ~~will~~ will take the place of the first reading and in the event of no modification being demanded, the text thereof shall be considered as approved.

NOTE: Should not protocol be passed upon at next meeting by Congress.

F. A committee shall be formed to record the acts adopted by the Congress. This committee shall only have cognizance of the (1) settled by the Congress and shall be solely in charge of the recording of the text of the decisions adopted and of presenting same to the approbation of the Congress. It shall be composed of six members each forming part of the plenipotentiaries and comprising, one Frenchman, one of English tongue, one of Italian tongue, one of Portuguese tongue, one of Slav tongue, one of German tongue.

NOTE: How is committee to be named?

Two. Representation of the Powers and of the States.

The question of the participating powers in the Congress present certain delicate problems. First of all, the belligerents, shall form part thereof, properly speaking: France, Great Britain, Italy, United States, Japan, Belgium, Servia, Greece, Portugal, Montenegro.

A place must also be reserved to the theoretical belligerents: China, Brazil, South American States (Cuba, Panama, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Haiti, Honduras, which might be represented by the United States to avoid crowding) Liberia.

Then will come the question of the new States recognized by the Allied Powers: Poland, Bohemia.

Some determination must also be taken in regard to our Allies who have treated with the enemy (without our recognizing these treaties) Roumania, Russia.

What form of representation shall we accept for the states in formation, non-recognized by us: Yugo-Slavs, Finns, Ukranians, Lithuanians, Esthonians, Lettons, Arabs, Armenians, Jews of Palestine.

Certain regulations interesting neutrals having to be examined

the Congress, it is expedient to provide for the presentation and protection of their interest: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Switzerland, Spain, Persia, Ethiopians, Mexico, Argentine, Chile, and other neutral American states (Bolivia, Peru, Uruguay, Eucador - in a state of severance of diplomatic relations, - and Colombia, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, San Salvador, Venezuela).

NOTE: Query?

Finally, the enemies, Germany, Bulgaria, Turkey, Bavaria, German-Austria, Magyarie.

Evidently there can be no idea of allowing neutrals to discuss territorial rearrangement, indemnities and guarantees but on the other hand it is impossible to exclude them from the debates concerning the future international organization to which their adhesion is desired.

NOTE: Ought not claims of neutrals against belligerents to be provided for in some way? Otherwise full justice will not be done.

THREE. PROCEDURE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE OPERATIONS.

Provision will have to be made for a first unofficial examination by the great powers (Great Britain, France, Italy, United States) of the questions to be discussed, examination which will lead to the preparation between them of the preliminaries of peace and the whole mechanism of the Congress of peace.

NOTE: This has the old element of danger which existed in the Concert of Powers, and yet to prevent confusion some method of the sort must be adopted.

It smacks of "secret diplomacy" and will doubtless invite that criticism by the smaller countries.

The work should evidently be divided among preparatory commissions formed only by plenipotentiaries (with the assistance of legal experts, financial, geographic, military, naval, industrial, and commercial experts, possessing consultative vote).

NOTE: Is this work limited to the four powers?

It may be foreseen that the three general plenipotentiaries who will deal with the settlement proper of the war will appoint as assistants one or two representatives more particularly qualified to study the principles of the league of Nations, that is to say, the stipulations of general public law which shall constitute the second great task of the Congress.

The three general plenipotentiaries (in accordance with the precedents mentioned herein above) might be for France: The Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Generalissimo.

The necessity of defining the limiting the delegations of the powers is imperative in order to avoid for instance the individual representation claimed by the important English colonies (a principal which cannot be allowed, for why should not a similar claim be presented by each of the different states composing the federation of the United States).

NOTE: I quite agree with this principle, and I have the impression that the suggestion of 7 members originated with the British, so that Canada, Australia and South Africa might each have a representative, though Gt. Britain would maintain the majority of 4 members.

FOUR: PRINCIPLES AND BASES OF NEGOTIATIONS.

Similarly to the Congress of Vienna, leading principles should be proclaimed:

~~THE~~ A. Right of peoples to decide their own destinies by free and secret vote (combined with the principle of a certain homogeneousness of the states, principally applicable to Bohemia, Tyrol, Istria, Dalmatia, Luxemburg as aforesaid). In other regions, sectionings will have to be carried out in view of the discordance between the administrative frontiers and the limits of the peoples which they divide: A. such is the case for the Polish countries incorporated in Prussia or Austria, for the Lithuanian countries incorporated in Prussia or Russia in Europe, for the Countries in-

corporated in the Ottoman Empire, on account of the confluence of the ethnical and religious groups, and of the difficulty of applying the criterion of equal and secret vote.

NOTE: Does ~~not~~ this also apply to Alsace-Lorraine, the Russian provinces, &c.?

B. Release from treaties concluded between them of such groups of states which by the fact of their admission to the Congress shall waive their right thereto: This principle is entirely in accordance with the ideas of President Wilson.

NOTE: This applied as I read it to all agreements made prior to or during the war - Russia, Italy, Japan and Great Britain in regard to Pacific Islands.

Such a declaration has the advantage of freeing the allies from any previous imperialist aims: the necessity of abolishing the agreements with Russia (which would comprise the cession of Constantinople to that power) would in itself (assure?) the adoption of such a measure.

As to Italy, should she not adhere thereto, it would be difficult to see how she could be admitted into the discussion: having previously to her entry into the war presented to the Allies minutely detailed conditions for the advantages she desired to derive therefrom, she would only be entitled to discuss the affairs of the others if she herself allowed discussion upon her own extensions.

NOTE: We must not forget the hostility and jealousy between France and Italy, and that this is France's plan.

Finally, this Congress, like all those which have preceded it, should adopt a basis of discussion. It cannot, like the previous ones, lean upon the stipulations of a treaty, inasmuch as hitherto the Powers have only concluded armistices (with Bulgaria, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Germany, which cannot serve as a basis discuss-

One single basis seems to exist at the present time: it is the solidary decision of the Allies upon their war aims, formulated January tenth 1917, in answer to the question of President Wilson, but it is rather a program than basis of negotiations.

It would therefore seem indispensable that the Prime Ministers and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the four great powers meet previously at Versailles to settle between them the affairs which the Congress shall have to deal with (that is to say, the preliminaries of peace) and the other in which they shall be discussed as well as the condition of the sittings of the Congress and its operations.

In a general way the questions to be discussed are segregated in two main series: First settlement proper of the war, second, elaboration of the league of nations.

This distinction would limit^{to} the parties really interested the discussion of the essential and immediate questions to be settled and, wards the interest of a large number of states to discuss the general principles of the organization of the world to which their participation has been covered.

A. SETTLEMENT OF THE WAR.

One. Political Stipulations.

- A. New States. One, already recognized (Poland, Czechoslovaks. Two, in course of formation (Yugo-Slavs, Russian countries, etc.).
- b. Territorial questions (restitution of territories, territories neutralized for the purposes of protection

NOTE: What does the last clause refer to? Protectorates
Neutral States?

First: Alsace-Lorraine (eighth Wilson proposition; Belgium, (seventh Wilson proposition); Italy (ninth Wilson proposition).

Second: Frontiers (France, Belgium, Servia, Roumania, etc).

Third: International status of means of communication, in particular those of Central Europe, rivers, railroads, canals, ports.

- C. Oriental question (twelfth Wilson proposition; Turkey Armenia, Syria, Palestine, Arabia.
- D. Colonies (fifth Wilson proposition).
- E. Extreme east, (Kiaochou, etc).

NOTE: Does this not cover Pacific Islands?
German owned concessions in China?

Two: Military and Naval Stipulations.

Military guarantees on land and sea, number of troops, dismantling of fortifications, reduction from war factories, territorial occupations, etc.

NOTE: Is this disarmament. If so, how about naval forces?
Sec. 5 under B ("League of Nations)."

Three: Stipulations of indemnities preparation of war damage on land and sea, restitutions, re-constitutions, compensations in kind, reimbursement of expenditure illegally imposed (G.R.B.)

Four: Economic and financial stipulations: Raw material, economic regime, settlement of accounts.

Five: Stipulations of private law. Settlement of private credits. Liquidation of sequestrations.

Six: Reestablishment of the conventional regime upset by the war

B. LEAGUE OF NATIONS (Stipulations of general public law).

One. League of nations (fourteenth Wilson proposition).

Two: Freedom of the seas (second Wilson proposition).

NOTE: Does this include a revision of the Rules of War on land, on sea, and in the air?

Three: International economic regime (third Wilson proposition

NOTE: should there not be some arrangement for codifying the principles of international law?

Four: Publicity of treaties (first Wilson proposition).

NOTE: Should not the subject of international arbitration be reviewed in connection with a league of nations?

Five: Limitation of armaments (fourth Wilson proposition.)"

I should appreciate very much if you will be good enough to telegraph me as soon as practicable any modifications, additions or suggestions you may care to make to me upon the above scheme of procedure.

Edward House.