Manuscript: League of Nations

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The great tragedy would be for us to get nothing from this League but a feeling that it is a bundle of compromises, of concessions to old greed and it has a larger set of ideas, greater knowledge of the difficulties of peoples must prevail in thinking of this League, or we are in danger of losing what has been gained. Grant what it is a great demonstration of human limitations are. No one who studies the making of this League can deny that with the tendency toward aspiration, that every nation has given up something, that what we have is not simply a large alliance of self interest.

Clearly we must keep in mind that what we have gained is something that must be extended to the rest of the world as rapidly as possible. That it is not intended strengthen groups who set themselves up with a "better than thou" thought.

Most certainly, we must keep and work for an understanding of what we have been fighting. We have not been fighting a people, but an idea. What we have to convey today is to fight the idea and not the people. That must be done by education.

It is just as well in all of the exhibitions of the framing of the League to ask ourselves what would have happened if we had been in the position of the nation we are condemning. For instance, take the outbursts of chauvinism on the
part of the German inhabitants of the Czecho-Slav state. Supposing you were a German citizen in Slovenia and that there were a million more of you—that you had been under German rule, are you quite sure that you would not have plotted against the new state so long as you thought there was a chance of overthrowing that new state?

Smyrna

Smyrna has been given to Turkey although her population is largely Greek. One reason given is that otherwise the Turkish citizens would pay taxes to build up Athens. As it now is it looks as though Greek citizens would pay taxes to build up Constantinople.

The illustration needed by us to develop the idea of a man running through a clash of instruments, or the shepards pipe rising above the storm in an Alpine valley. Take your Big 10 and remember that you have traders there. That Italy, Japan in supporting the Allies made contracts with them for certain things—Italy for Dalmatia and for certain Greek islands; Japan for Pacific islands.

Can the fourteen points displace the treaties? France in order to get what she wants will probably support Italy and Japan against England and the United States.
But England is a partner to both treaties. In a way the United States stands against the other four. She will not break up the League, however, even if the bargaining is completed. She loses the chances, if she does, of the repudiation of her debt of nine billions of dollars. Again she is not going to insist upon the internationalism of canals, like Kiel, for that would mean the internationalism of Panama. She is not going to insist on open ports with the necessity of making all railroad rates and canal rates public that might apply to hers. That is, in considering this whole thing we must be careful not to too severely blame other nations. Can we accuse Japan of a lack of idealism when we, who profess welcoming all nations, insist on shutting out the Japs?

The League has never been in doubt. The best League was always impossible. One had only to look the gathered conference in the face not to realize the large leement of machinalism present. There was always a sneer on Scaneno’s face; there was always a storm in Hughes’ heart; there was always a stern unyielding in Baron Machino.