

And from that day to this, Mr. Chairman, there has come down through all the ages a Thomas sect, who, having eyes, see not, and, having ears, hear not, and neither will they apprehend nor understand. These gentlemen pretend not to believe those German atrocities until they first thrust their un-American, Germanized hand into the bleeding and riven side of the American Republic. And in this discussion to-day I am sorry to say that certain gentlemen who are clothed with power upon this floor—American citizens who only last Monday held up their hands and, facing that flag yonder and the portrait of the Father of his Country and that other portrait over there, the great Lafayette, who came hither from abroad and gave his chivalry and services to our cause; some of these gentlemen who took the oath of office, I say, in the presence of all these stimulating suggestions and inspiring influences—have championed not American rights, but they have espoused the cause and defended the vandalism of Prussian autocracy. [Applause.] However, from this time on, when war is declared, there must be, Mr. Chairman, no divided America, because a house divided against itself can not stand. Every man must be either for his country or against his country. [Applause.]

The time will soon be here when every citizen must stand and uphold the rights and honor of an Americanized democracy or condone the piracy and vandalism of a Prussianized autocracy. And how does the Zimmermann note, an official document intercepted, written to the German minister in the City of Mexico, appeal to men of patriotic blood and American fervor?

How would it appear, Mr. Chairman, when the war is over, should we be trampled in the dust by a divided Americanism, if this country, born in the shock of battle and dedicated to the freedom of Americans and to the rights of humankind the world over—how would it appear to those Americans and to their followers and to their champions if this Republic should be Japanese and Mexicanized and Prussianized, if you please? Yet this is the proposition officially made by Germany. I repeat, this is no time for division. Every man should stand with his face to the enemy, and give, if need be, of his blood as well as of his treasure. We have been at war for the past two years, but it has been a one-sided, a unilateral war, a war conducted by Germany against American rights and American citizens. I believe that when the sword is drawn it will be drawn in honor and sheathed in American glory. We seek no conquest, said the President the other day. We seek no territorial aggrandizement. We seek no indemnities. We will give of our blood and of our treasure that which becometh a great, free people to give, that their rights shall be maintained not only upon land but upon the seas, and that democracy finally shall inherit the earth. And with this spirit, Mr. Chairman, and animated by this fervor and this patriotic impulse, we will go forward, doing our duty as America has always done, though the very heavens fall. [Applause.] Of course I do not know the extent of the opposition to this resolution. So far as I am concerned, permit me to say that I myself have been depressed for many weeks, and have carried, indeed, a most heavy heart. This is the most solemn hour the Republic has witnessed in half a century. This will be the most solemn vote ever cast by me. The war is forced upon us, and to strike back is our only alternative; otherwise we would earn and deserve the contempt of all mankind. Every patriotic American will stand for his country and give of his mite, even to the sacrifice of his property and his life itself, if need be. And this is the appeal that the American people will make to America—that that flag, the insignia of national honor and American rights, may not trail in the dust, but may be upheld triumphant and victorious, to champion the rights of democracy and of mankind everywhere. [Applause.]

Mr. KITCHIN. Mr. Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from North Carolina is recognized for 10 minutes. [Applause.]

Mr. KITCHIN. Mr. Chairman, in view of the many assumptions of loyalty and patriotism on the part of some of those who favor the resolution, and insinuations by them of cowardice and disloyalty on the part of those who oppose it, offshoots, doubtless, of a passionate moment, let me at once remind the House that it takes neither moral nor physical courage to declare a war for others to fight. [Applause.] It is evidence of neither loyalty nor patriotism for one to urge others to get into a war when he knows that he himself is going to keep out.

The depth of my sorrow, the intensity of my distress in contemplating the measureless step proposed, God only knows. The right and necessity of this momentous resolution are addressed to the individual judgment of the Members of the House. Too grave is the responsibility for anyone to permit another to stand sponsor for his conscience.

Profoundly impressed with the gravity of the situation, appreciating to the fullest the penalties which a war-mad moment will impose, my conscience and judgment, after mature thought and fervent prayer for rightful guidance, have marked out clearly the path of my duty, and I have made up my mind to walk it, if I go barefooted and alone. [Applause.] I have come to the undoubting conclusion that I should vote against this resolution. [Applause.] If I had a single doubt, I would with profoundest pleasure resolve it in favor of the view of the administration and of a large majority of my colleagues, who have so recently honored me with their confidence. I know that I shall never criticize any Member for advocating this resolution. I concede—I feel—that he casts his vote in accordance with sincere conviction. I know, too, that for my vote I shall be not only criticized, but denounced from one end of the country to the other. The whole yelping pack of defamers and revilers in the Nation will at once be set upon my heels.

My friends, I can not leave my children lands and riches—I can not leave them fame—but I can leave them the name of an ancestor, who, mattering not the consequences to himself, never dared to hesitate to do his duty as God gave him to see it. [Applause.]

Half the civilized world is now a slaughterhouse for human beings. This Nation is the last hope of peace on earth, good will toward men. I am unwilling for my country by statutory command to pull up the last anchor of peace in the world and extinguish during the long night of a world-wide war the only remaining star of hope for Christendom. I am unwilling by my vote to-day for this Nation to throw away the only remaining compass to which the world can look for guidance in the paths of right and truth, of justice and humanity, and to leave only force and blood to chart hereafter the path of mankind to tread.

By passage of this resolution we enter the war, and the universe becomes one vast drama of horrors and blood—one boundless stage upon which will play all the evil spirits of earth and hell. All the demons of inhumanity will be let loose for a rampage throughout the world. Whatever be the future, whatever be the rewards or penalties of this Nation's step, I shall always believe that we could and ought to have kept out of this war.

Great Britain every day, every hour, for two years has violated American rights on the seas. We have persistently protested. She has denied us not only entrance into the ports of the central powers but has closed to us by force the ports of neutrals. She has unlawfully seized our ships and our cargoes. She has rifled our mails. She has declared a war zone sufficiently large to cover all the ports of her enemy. She made the entire North Sea a military area—strewn it with hidden mines and told the neutral nations of the world to stay out or be blown up. We protested. No American ship was sunk, no American life was destroyed, because we submitted and did not go in. We kept out of war. We sacrificed no honor. We surrendered permanently no essential rights. We knew that these acts of Great Britain, though in plain violation of international law and of our rights on the seas, were not aimed at us. They were directed at her enemy. They were inspired by military necessity. Rather than plunge this country into war, we were willing to forego for the time our rights. I approved that course then; I approve it now.

Germany declares a war zone sufficiently large to cover the ports of her enemy. She infests it with submarines and warns the neutral world to stay out, though in plain violation of our rights and of international law. We know that these acts are aimed not directly at us but intended to injure and cripple her enemy, with which she is in a death struggle.

We refuse to yield; we refuse to forego our rights for the time. We insist upon going in.

In my judgment, we could keep out of the war with Germany as we kept out of the war with Great Britain, by keeping our ships and our citizens out of the war zone of Germany as we did out of the war zone of Great Britain. And we would sacrifice no more honor, surrender no more rights in the one case than in the other. Or we could resort to armed neutrality, which the President recently urged and for which I voted on March 1.

But we are told that Germany has destroyed American lives while Great Britain destroyed only property. Great Britain destroyed no American lives, because this Nation kept her ships and her citizens out of her war zone which she sowed with hidden mines.

But are we quite sure that the real reason for war with Germany is the destruction of lives as distinguished from property, that to avenge the killing of innocent Americans and to protect American lives war becomes a duty?

Mexican bandits raided American towns, shot to death sleeping men, women, and children in their own homes. We did not go to war to avenge these deaths. We sent an armed expedition into Mexico to hunt down and punish the bandits. Away out from the American border the soldiers of Carranza, of the Mexican Government, which we had recognized, met our soldiers, shot the American flag from the hands of an American soldier, shot down to the death our soldiers, and Carranza, instead of disavowing the dastardly act, defiantly approved and ratified it. Yet we did not go to war to avenge the destruction of American lives and the insult and assault on the American flag. We were willing to forego our rights rather than plunge this country into war while half the world was in conflagration. I approved that course then; I approve it now.

Why can we not, why should we not, forego for the time being the violation of our rights by Germany, and do as we did with Great Britain, do as we did with Mexico, and thus save the universe from being wrapped in the flames of war.

I have hoped and prayed that God would forbid our country going into war with another for doing that which perhaps under the same circumstances we ourselves would do.

Are we quite sure that in a war with Germany or Japan, if our fleet was bottled up, helpless, and our ships of commerce had been swept from the seas, all our ports closed by the enemy's fleet, imports of fuel and food and clothing for our people and ammunition for our soldiers were denied, with our very life trembling in the balance, we would not, in the last struggle for existence, strike our enemy with the only weapon of the sea remaining, though in violation of international law? Would one contend that under the circumstances our submarine commanders should permit the landing at the ports of the enemy arms and ammunition with which to shoot down our brave American boys when they had it in their power to prevent it? Would we demand of our submarine commanders that they give the benefit of the doubt to questions of international law rather than to the safety of our country and the lives of our soldiers?

War upon the part of a nation is sometimes necessary and imperative. But here no invasion is threatened. Not a foot of our territory is demanded or coveted. No essential honor is required to be sacrificed. No fundamental right is asked to be permanently yielded or suspended. No national policy is contested. No part of our sovereignty is questioned. Here the overt act, ruthless and brutal though it be, is not aimed directly at us. The purpose of the proposed enemy is not our injury, either in property or life. The whole aim and purpose and effort are directed at a powerful enemy with which she is in a life and death struggle.

The causes for which we are now asked to declare war could have been given with equal—yea, greater—force 30 days or 10 days after the first step taken by the German Army in its march toward Paris. They existed then.

The House and the country should thoroughly understand that we are asked to declare war not to protect alone American lives and American rights on the high seas. We are to make the cause of Great Britain, France, and Russia, right or wrong, our cause. We are to make their quarrel, right or wrong, our quarrel. We are to help fight out, with all the resources in men, money, and credit of the Government and its people a difference between the belligerents of Europe to which we were and are utter strangers. Nothing in that cause, nothing in that quarrel, has or does involve a moral or equitable or material interest in or obligation of our Government or our people.

To this program every impulse of patriotism, every sense of right, every feeling of humanity, every sentiment of loyalty, every obligation of duty within me combine in forbidding my consent until the Government and its people, through its rightful and constitutional voice—the Congress of the United States—have clearly spoken, in the passage of such a resolution as is now before the House. Then and then only will it become the patriotic duty of each Member of the House and Senate to merge his individual judgment and conviction into those so declared of his country, as it will become the duty of every American, in and out of Congress, to make the judgment and conviction of his country thus written into statute his judgment and conviction. [Applause.] The voice of law will command, and a patriotic duty will demand, loyal and earnest and active submission and obedience. Until then each should have and does have the inherent right, and it is his bounden duty to himself and to truth, to vote his conviction.

I can conceive of a brave, loyal, devoted son of a father who contemplates a personal difficulty with another begging and persuading him to refrain, even condemning, and protesting in vain against his proposed step, but when the final word is spoken and blows are about to be given, taking off his coat and

struggling with all of his soul and might in defense of that father.

When this Nation, as it doubtless will to-day, speaks the final word through the Congress, I trust I will be found in relation with my Government and my country emulating the example of that son. [Applause.]

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. ROGERS] is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Chairman, I am unreservedly in favor of the pending resolution. I had the honor of voting to report it out of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and I shall have the honor of voting to pass it through the House. And yet I realize, as every man must, the gravity and importance of the step which the Congress of the United States is taking to-day. War is at all times a frightful thing, and science and invention have combined in these recent months and years to make it doubly frightful. The toll of men, the flower of our Nation, may well be great as a result of this step; the drain upon our resources and the burden of taxation upon us will certainly be severe beyond precedent. This is a solemn hour; it is no time for heroics or hysterics, and yet, as I view the situation, no patriot can hesitate to cast his vote—and it makes no difference whether his vote be cast as a Member of this body or as a member of our body politic—in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war against Germany.

Frankly, I do not believe that the question whether Germany has given us a cause for war is arguable. For nearly two and a half years she has in the most deliberate and often in the most contemptuous way disregarded the fundamental and sacred rights of American citizens and the American Nation both at home and abroad. Almost daily for long periods of time has Germany committed at least one act against the peace and safety of the United States which was an abundant cause for war. I can not conceive how any thinking and even moderately informed man, whether in the United States or in Germany, can fail to agree that there is ample justification—that for more than two years there has at all times been ample justification—for the United States to take the step which she is taking to-day. The only possible argument, even on the part of those who are pacifists or pro-Germans, must be as to whether the present declaration that a state of war exists is hastily taken or premature. Perhaps a very brief outline of some of the high lights of the past two years will be illuminating in this connection.

On February 4, 1915, two months and two years ago, the chief of the admiral staff of the German Navy issued a proclamation, reading in part as follows:

The waters surrounding Great Britain and Ireland, including the whole English Channel are hereby declared to be war zone. On and after the 18th of February, 1915, every enemy merchant ship found in the said war zone will be destroyed without its being always possible to avert the dangers threatening the crews and passengers on that account.

In a memorial accompanying this proclamation it was said:

Neutral powers are accordingly forewarned not to continue to entrust their crews, passengers, or merchandise to such vessels. . . . It will not always be possible to prevent a neutral vessel from becoming the victim of an attack intended to be directed against a vessel of the enemy.

This entire program of Germany, of course, involved a direct violation of the principles of international law in a manner vitally dangerous to the welfare of the United States. Accordingly, on February 10, 1915, Secretary of State Bryan—not usually regarded as a jingo—transmitted to Germany a note, reading in part as follows:

If the commanders of German vessels of war . . . should destroy on the high seas an American vessel or the lives of American citizens, it would be difficult for the Government of the United States to view the act in any other light than as an indefensible violation of neutral rights which it would be very hard indeed to reconcile with the friendly relations now so happily subsisting between the two Governments. If such a deplorable situation should arise, the Imperial German Government can readily appreciate that the Government of the United States would be constrained to hold the Imperial German Government to a strict accountability for such acts of their naval authorities and to take any steps it might be necessary to take to safeguard American lives and property and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas.

Germany's answer to this note was to sink the steamship *Falaba* on March 28, with the resultant drowning of an American citizen; to attack the American vessel *Cushing* on April 28; to torpedo the American vessel *Gulfight* on May 1, with the resultant death of two or more Americans; and, as a crowning horror, to torpedo and sink the steamship *Lusitania* on May 7, with the resultant loss of life of 114 American citizens. Remember the "strict accountability" phrase in the note of February 10; remember the acts by Germany which I have just related; and then remember that all these occurred two years ago. Is there any flavor of precipitation in our course to-day?