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Pan American Financial Conference



ADDRESS

OF

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of the United States of America

BEFORE THE

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ADDRESS.

Members of the Pan American Financial Conference; and Ladies and Gentlemen:

This meeting of distinguished citizens of the Pan American Republics is of epochal significance. It is held among international conditions of the most stupendous and momentous character that the world has ever experienced. For the Federal Trade Commission I am commissioned to say that it is desirous of doing all things, that in its powers lie, to further and extend the beneficent purposes and effects of this great conference.

CONFERENCE DISTINCTIVE OF THE SPIRIT OF THE AMERICAS.

It is distinctive of the genius of the Americas that the vision of one of the greatest Secretaries of the Treasury of the United States should have conceived this idea, and that the enlightened and progressive statesmanship of 18 republics should have grasped, sustained, and executed this altogether remarkable plan. This meeting, indeed, typifies both the ideal and practical quality of the genius of the American Republics.

COUNCILS OF WAR AND COUNCILS OF PEACE.

Across the seas, councils of the commanding brains of the nations of Europe are also engaged in great problems, pertaining to the mobilization of men and money for the purposes of war. This council of the Americas is held to marshal the great forces of peace into conditions that make for mutual helpfulness. The genius of Europe is addressed to war; the spirit of the Americas is turned toward peace. From the deliberations here there will come no colossal destruction of property, no horrible sacrifice of men, no anguishing hearts of women, no orphaning of children, no burdens of inferior race production, and increased taxation for posterity. Your deliberations are fertile with the promise that greater argosies of peace and good will will sail the seas; that more factories will hum; that more men will be at work; that the standard of living may be raised; that more children may be educated; that more women may attend to their household cares singing with the contentment of peace, as the days go by; and that the ideals of re-

publican altruism may demonstrate to a world gone mad that the gospel of the Carpenter of Galilee is not a lie, but a living hope and beacon for the republics of the Americas, in their contribution to the world and to its civilization.

EFFECTS OF THE EUROPEAN WAR SIMILARLY FELT.

It is in keeping with the practicalities, judgment, and wisdom characteristic of the American financier, master of industry, and statesmen, that this common council of the nations of this continent should be held at this crisis in international conditions. The European war has altered and will alter the trade courses of the world. It has served to give us all pause, to analyze conditions that have been permitted to grow and to obtain, while we were secure in the confidence of peace, and lulled into indifference by temporary advantage. This war has startled us into a realization of the manner in which we were tending and the courses of trade which the nations of this continent had permitted to develop. Problems have been thus rudely thrust upon us all alike. This upheaval of conditions overnight has brought similar consequences to the republics of this hemisphere. The dilemma of the cotton planters of the Southern States of this country was no more severe or typical than that which confronted the coffee planters of Brazil, the wheat growers of Argentina, or the nitrate producers of Chile. The suspension of our boards of trade was duplicated in Santiago, Buenos Aires, and Rio de Janeiro. We were all in the same boat, afloat between the Atlantic and the Pacific.

INTERDEPENDENCE OF AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

In this situation we perforce look in upon ourselves. Such readjustments as are available we find are largely dependent upon our interrelations which exist and which may be developed. It is to the interest of each of us, nationally, to develop commercial and financial relations between ourselves. This is the underlying fact and problem which confronts this conference.

MUTUAL INTEREST IN PAN-AMERICAN TRADE.

Trade, if it is to be permanent, must be based on mutual advantage. Ships must bring us the cocoa and hides of Bolivia, Venezuela, and Uruguay, the coffee, rubber, and ivory of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Panama, the fruit, potash, fibers, and meats of Colombia, of Honduras, Paraguay, Peru, and Salvador. You furnish these products and others equal and superior to the similar products produced anywhere in the world. We need them; you need our prod-

ucts. If contracts are to be renewed and repeated, they must bring a profitable consideration to both parties.

It is suggestive of great promise that the expressions from the nations here represented all contain the recognition of the fact that the permanency of our future relationships, and the profitableness of them to us all, must depend upon the degree not alone of mutual profit, but of mutual confidence which we have in the integrity of the motive of the other. Trade, like contracts between men, to develop and to grow, must be founded upon good faith between the parties. Trade thrives on profit, but profit flies with trade without confidence.

MUTUAL CONFIDENCE DEMONSTRATED BY PAST FACTS.

It is a matter of congratulation that in this situation professions of mutual confidence and integrity of motive are not limited to assurances in the future, but are demonstrated by accomplishments in the past. As has been said by a distinguished statesman from South America in the course of this conference, the attitude of the United States to Cuba gave earnest of the spirit of the American people to all the world, of the integrity and sincerity of its altruistic purpose and object. The statement of the greatest proponent of peace in the world, the President of the United States, made at Mobile, Ala., a year ago, bespoke the spirit of America in denying the desire of the United States to attain by conquest a fraction of land of this continent other than what is now possessed. The splendid service, the generous spirit, and the unanimity of action of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile in the Mexican mediation conference, all in the recent past, the enactment of the peace treaties, give pledge of the sincerity and good faith in the common purposes and ends of the Republics of this continent in their dealings with each other.

IDENTITY OF PRINCIPLES AUGURS PERMANENT RELATIONSHIPS.

Underlying these facts and accomplishments cementing mutual confidence and respect there is a promise of permanency because of the identity of the principles underlying our Governments.

Fundamentally the common purpose of republican government assures that in our development separately and in relation with one another we shall be guided by a common ideal and by a similar purpose, object, and end. The problems of trade will be attacked with identical conceptions of what constitutes the proper attitude of government toward industry and trade and of what constitutes justice and fairness to all men in the avenues of trade.

The development of the future will be financial and industrial. In both of these there is possibility of friction between nations.

INTERNATIONAL MONOPOLY AND UNFAIR COMPETITION.

Great industrial developments are imminent in the different nations of this hemisphere. They will and should be fostered. But it is fortunate that in the Republics represented in this conference there is identity of attitude as to the relation of government to industry and to its citizens. It has been instinctive to democracy to recognize that monopolistic private development in the negation of democracy; that industrial private monopoly is industrial tyranny; that profession of political freedom is hypocrisy unless freedom of individual opportunity through government is preserved. Every Republic on this continent holds private monopoly to be indefensible and intolerable and antagonistic to the spirit of republican conceptions of government. It is fortunate that this common point of view is grounded on the very foundations of our political philosophy, for in the great developments that are at hand "enlightened selfishness" must control mammoth developments of power, which may become greater than the states or nations of their creation. Monopoly of an international character is not a fear of the future. It is a fact of the present. Unfair methods of competition to destroy rivals are not confined to local monopoly, but may be participated in by nations as well. There is no logical or ethical distinction between governments and individuals or corporations if engaged in such practices. They are equally intolerable. A common policy locally applied by the nations of this hemisphere gives promise of the development of a policy in common internationally applied for the mutual protection of all. Last May, in Paris, at the convention of the chambers of commerce of the world, it is to be noted that one of the most important committees appointed, upon which were placed representatives from all of the industrial nations of the world there represented, was a committee to formulate a code as to what constituted unfair competition in international commerce, which code should be sustained by the enlightened public opinion of the industrial nations of the earth. The International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property, to which there are 22 signatures of the nations of the earth, and which expressly provides for the elimination of unfair competition, indicates the necessity for such development. But three of the nations here in conference were signatories thereto.

A PAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL.

The fact that the Republics of this hemisphere founded their policies with reference to industrial monopoly and industrial freedom of opportunity upon the same political philosophy augurs well for the development of a Pan American international code of what shall

constitute fairness in trade. Such a code, if sustained by the nations and peoples of the Western Hemisphere, might be interpreted and executed by a common Pan American tribunal, and the common judgment of the Republics of the Western Hemisphere thus expressed would sustain and enforce its decrees by the weight of an enlightened and common public opinion. Thus through the instrumentalities of trade and commerce would another step toward the elimination of war and the perpetuation of peace be effected. The seed for this hope may be found in the Pan American Union and the identity of aspiration and policy of the Republics of this hemisphere.

DOLLAR EXCHANGE AND DOLLAR DIPLOMACY.

No less in the financial developments arising from international relations is there promise of permanent relations through the establishment of dollar exchange. Dollar exchange differs from dollar diplomacy. The idea of dollar exchange contains no suggestion of diplomatic differences or conflict of interests which might engender distrust and strained relations between the Governments involved. Dollar exchange gives no special governmental support to special interest. It rather has to do with the great multitude of citizens engaged in dealing with each other in different parts of this hemisphere and is designed to serve and aid them to their mutual advantage. Dollar exchange does not seek an advantage over a contested situation. It serves as a medium for the more facile exchange of commodities to the mutual advantage of both parties thereto. It incurs no risk of the imposition by a stronger power upon a weaker by reason of a mistake or a misuse of power. Commercial advantage for the benefit of all, not service to the advantage of the few, is the end and purpose of government participation in dollar exchange.

THE MISSION OF THE REPUBLICS OF THE AMERICAS.

In conclusion, will you permit me to say that the nations here represented are the exponents of a great idea, one of the greatest ideas in the world; an idea which has inspired every great thinker, teacher, or benefactor of civilization; an idea which has moved men and nations to great and noble deeds and accomplishments—the idea of altruism. Republican self-government is the essence of altruistic conception. Democracy, the government for the common man, is the translation of the Sermon on the Mount into terms of national entity. And in the chaos of the world ideas that has upset the course of civilization within the past year it is the mission of the repub-

lics of the earth to place upon their thresholds and bind as frontlets upon their brows those fundamental principles on which the fathers founded these nations and by reason of which these nations have endured and brought blessings and peace to their citizens and to us.

We are of different races and tongues and creeds, but we have this heritage in common: Our ancestors all had the virtue and vigor of the pioneer. They sought betterment for themselves and their children. They came to a new country; they dreamed dreams, and endured hardships for the sake of their dreams. They dedicated the best years of their manhood and all of their interests to create, serve, and perpetuate a government that dedicated to the common good of all men. This service they have rendered to their country and to us, their children. We therefore have in common the hopes and aspirations of our fathers. We have in common bequeathed to us those ideals which Bolivar, Rosas, and San Martin, and the founders of this government fought for and on which the governments under which we live were founded. Our traditions, our purpose, our aspirations, all suggest friendship, mutual trust, mutual helpfulness.

Our hope suggests a probable common part in contributing to civilization in practical realization that ultimate service of government to society which every teacher, prophet, seer, or saint has sought for the happiness of man.

