

# Wwi: president wilsons stake for world peace essay

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During World War I, the United States of America took a stance of neutrality in 1914. It was firm on its decision not to get involved with the brewing conflict across the globe. This choice was a consensus amongst the majority of the population who saw nothing but loss from participation in warfare. Many other countries like Germany, Russia, and Great Britain were compelled to side due to forged treaties between the two warring nations; Austria-Hungary and Serbia. However, claims about breach of certain rights have forced the previously impartial United States to seek swift actions towards its provoker, Germany (Kramer, 1996). It officially fought alongside the Allied forces against the Central Power in April 6, 1916. One year inside the battlefield took the lives of one hundred and twenty thousand Americans who bravely fought for the cause of their motherland. President Woodrow Wilson believed about the importance of preserving moral interests in the face of these destructive events. In January of 1918, he made a speech addressing the issues of his time by way of fourteen chief statements that sought amity between the opposing nations; it was called as 'Wilson's 14 points.'

The points advocated peace and pursued a more diplomatic route in settling and avoiding disputes surrounding the 'The Great War' (Thronveit, 2011). The following are summaries of the influential fourteen points by President Wilson speech to Congress. The first point emphasized about eradicating secrecy between signed agreements and promoted openness among countries. The second point talked about the freedom to traverse the seas without fear of hostility from neighboring territories. The third point asked for unbarred economic trades worldwide. The fourth point requested for the

reduction of armaments enough to guarantee security for the civilian people. The fifth point asked for unbiased resolutions by the colonies and to direct decisions to the best interest of the society as a whole. The sixth point demanded that Russia was to be left alone to develop unrestrictedly from the German sovereignty. The seventh point spoke of Belgium to be brought back to its former self as during the pre-war period. The eighth point commanded the liberation of France and permitted to reclaim Alsace-Lorraine annexed by the German Empire. The ninth point pertained to sharply delineating the borders of Italy which concerned mostly about clarification of lands acquired by the Italian government from its many treaties. The tenth point allowed the people of Austria-Hungary to have a national self-determination. The eleventh point concerned the Balkan states to have freedom, own allegiances and government. The twelfth point concerned the Turkish Empire being rightly ruled by the Turkish government while other nationalities in the land are to have security and fair governance. The thirteenth point proclaimed Poland as an independent state with nondiscriminatory access to the sea. The last and fourteenth point proposed a union of nations with sole foundation based on mutual understanding and agreement with respect to territorial affairs of all the states.

President Wilson and Sir William Wiseman had an interview which elaborated the Fourteen Points contributing to Germany's acceptance of Wilson's negotiations (Boothe, 1973). Furthermore, the propositions were later accepted by Italy and France on November 1, 1918. United Kingdom suggested adding to the negotiation points that Germany was to reimburse the sustained damages it perpetrated during the war. These points set the

groundwork for amnesties between Germany and the Allied forces which ended World War I on November 11, 1918.

President Wilson had envisioned domains free of administrative discord and countries being highly transparent to each other (Thompson, 2011). His pursuit of world peace helped the foundation of the League of Nations which he outlined during the aforementioned '14 points' speech. However, his original objectives were not fully realized by the League's covenants. Other countries were more interested in retribution than with global order.

President Wilson was met with a strong opposition from the Republican Leader of the Senate, Henry Cabot Lodge. Lodge believed of the compromising position the country would be under because of Article X stated by the League. This drew moral obligations and insinuated the United States' predicament to adhere to the resolutions of the league. He argued that the country could be under the control of a supranational government should it become a member of the association. This thereby prompted President Wilson to return in presenting the treaty of Versailles to the Senate.

In 1919, the United States, Great Britain, France, and Italy, dubbed as the Big four powers, convened at Paris Peace Conference creating the Treaty of Versailles. It was signed by President Wilson together with the leaders of the other three Nations. Nonetheless, his disposition was not readily shared among political parties when the treaty's conditions were laid down the table back at his motherland.

Soon after, President Wilson fell ill and was bed-ridden because of a debilitating stroke on October 1919. It greatly diminished the possibility of

making a solid petition in backing his claims. Ethnic groups began voicing out objections pointing that Wilson's settlements posed unjust conditions (Keylor, 2013). The majority refused to ratify the treaty. It was then voted down by the United States Senate naming dangerous consequences to political and economic vantage point as reasons.

Unfortunately, President Woodrow Wilson's unfulfilled ideals failed to prevent the complete reconciliation among the Nations. These attempts to achieve permanent peace were hindered by few of the devastated nation's lingering grudge towards Germany. Instead of repenting, Germany's guilt turned to aggression and commenced to bloodier frontlines which would claim four hundred and twenty thousand Americans soldiers and civilians in the future.

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