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ANNIVERSARY OF BIRTHDAY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

SPEECH

OF

HON. JAS. HAMILTON LEWIS,
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ANNIVERSARY OF BIRTHDAY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN—OBSERVATIONS ON THE DEMOCRACY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE EXTENSION OF IT BY WOODROW WILSON TO THE WORLD—AMERICA'S INFLUENCE ON THE GOVERNMENTS OF EARTH—THE DEFINING OF THE PARTICULAR FORM OF DEMOCRACY AMERICA IS FIGHTING TO ESTABLISH.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. President, pursuant to a notice I gave yesterday, I find it agreeable to avail myself of the day, under the arrangement of the Senate, to present something that might be termed a treatise upon the course of democracy and its advance in the world as influenced by America. I do this, sir, under ægis of the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, an occasion which we dwell upon with delight and memorialize with pride. Mr. President, I am just informed that I will be followed this morning by the eminent senior Senator from Minnesota [Mr. NELSON], who, I understand, expects to address himself to the personal life of the distinguished dead patriot. I will omit much of the subject of biography, knowing it will be dealt with in all the delicacy and finish that such phase of the subject could demand. For myself, Mr. President, I take the liberty, I may say, to impose somewhat upon the generosity of this body to present some thoughts that partake rather of the philosophy of government than obituary of the hero.

Mr. President, but for the circumstances surrounding us at this time I would not impose upon the hour to the extent I feel the present occasion justifies.

With the Senate's consent I submit on the natal day of Abraham Lincoln some views on the things for which he stood and for which America with Woodrow Wilson fights.

The faithful Judean on the festal day of his prophets turns his face to Jerusalem and dreams upon Jehovah.

The oriental, salaaming to the sun, cries out through the muezzin his Allah be praised.

America, worshiping the God of her fathers, turns upon each national memorial day to the memory of God's noblest offerings to man—America's blessed patriots.

Among the calendar days set aside for reverence by America's children is this, the 12th of February—the birthday of Abraham Lincoln—Illinois's greatest gift to civilization. Here in this Senate we offer up our tribute of memory and worship of virtue in commemorating Abraham Lincoln, the apostle of the liberty of man and the standard bearer of democracy to the world.

Sir, here for a moment we pause to reflect on the meaning of the word democracy as the world now knows it. Bacon, in *Novum Organum*, refers to the confusion made by not giving accurate import to words and to their understood meaning. Says the philosopher—

Men imagine that reason governs words, when in fact words react on the understanding. * * *

The solemn disputes of learned men about words and meaning has rendered philosophy inactive. It were better, says Bacon—to proceed advisedly in the first instances and bring such disputes to a regular issue by a definition wholly expressed and clearly understandable.

The democracy implanted by Lincoln and advanced by Wilson is but the defining of nature's purpose to endow her mankind with equality of opportunity in all objects of life, to assure freedom of man in all pursuits of human existence, and to make sure full liberty to govern one's self by one's own will and to establish through the voice or vote of the people of any locality any form of government fitting to the needs of such people.

This is the democracy heralded by Jefferson, established by Lincoln, and now forwarded by Wilson.

Mr. President, from the day when Thomas Jefferson inscribed in America's declaration of freedom that "All men are created equal" to the hour when Wilson cried out "Make the world safe for democracy," Liberty, the daughter of Democracy, has moved over the earth as an angel, lighting the housetops, shaking open the mountains, separating the hills, that all men may come forth from oppressed places to the valley of restoration and to the land of promise. Democracy is to-day justified of her children and Liberty is now vindicated by the progress of her sons.

It is in the United States of America that democracy has its hope for all future and republican government exhibits its success to inspire mankind. George Washington commanded his followers to the fight for freedom of man and liberty of nations. It was not opposition to England as a country or to kings as rulers that was the inspiration of the sacrifices of our Revolutionary heroes. It was against the system of persecution of man and oppression of country under the rule of kings that these sacred fathers pledged their lives, their property, and their sacred honor. In that contest America was triumphant and in her station as victor in the right and destroyer of the wrong she has become to be the envy of nations and the marvel of civilization. These United States stood sworn in presence of Heaven to keep this Republic the ideal of free governments and the model of triumphant democracy. Its object was to assure liberty to man, to provide justice to nations, and establish a refuge to oppressed mankind. This Nation has lived to fulfill the mission to which she was dedicated by her founders and to which she is pledged to her children. She is the first and to be the greatest free Republic of the earth. Full high against Heaven's outposts she tosses her banner as she trumpets her tribute to—

Flag of the free heart's hope and home
By angel hands to valor given,
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in Heaven. .

Forever float that standard sheet
Where stands the foe but falls before us,
With liberty's soil beneath our feet,
And freedom's banner waving o'er us.

Senators, no democracy was ever founded in any government of earth that did not have to fight to continue its existence or maintain its ideals. Hear Goethe proclaim to Prussia, "Those who have liberty must fight to keep it." The test of every free land that tries out its worthiness or unworthiness to exist as a government of freedom has been its willingness or refusal to fight and die for its faith. No government that has not exhibited a capacity to sacrifice all it has for the theory for which it was founded, and to prove its ability to protect and perpetuate the institutions it has created, has ever yet existed for a length of time sufficient to be recorded in history as having fostered liberty or transmitted democracy to men. No government has yet been accorded by civilization a place among the nations of the earth until it had first demonstrated its worthiness to administer justice by doing justice to itself, and then to prove its power in conflict to overcome its natural enemies, whether from within or without. Says Hegel:

The history of the world is not the theater of happiness—it is the arena of conflict as against a part of itself or to prove the worth of the whole of itself.

The first assault that is made on the establishment of liberty is from within. It comes from the conflict of ideals of government or from rivalry of aspiration of leaders for personal honors. With this storm weathered—this tide of internal sea beaten back or wooed by diplomacy and gentleness to silence—the next assault is of foes arising from without. This is the attack of those who from envy of success and achievement, or from fear of competition, seek to destroy the rising power to avoid the influence of its example, or to prevent the dethronement of autocracy through the privileges of liberty.

The Judean governments broke in sections upon form and ceremony of religious sacrifice, and turned to rend each other.

Thus they were left as the prey to the assault from without. It came from Egypt, and the Jewish people wandered 40 years in bondage. Then, though restored, repeated their folly and were overcome by Rome, and Judea is a Province obeying Tiberius—

Greece for a season met her internal wars and repelled every uprising within and against ambition of leaders or conflict of ideals preserved her government as the Greece of Phidias and Pericles and the home of art and beauty sublime. But, enervated with ease, beguiled by riches, and decadent in morals, Greece became too selfish of her comforts to oppose the advance of the Macedonian Philip in his assault from without. The cry of Demosthenes, "On against Philip," the warnings of statesmen and patriots awakened no response. Greece, in the confidence which prosperity too often infuses, forgot patriotism and yielded to personal aggrandizement and fell before the advance of the foreign enemy and became a victim to world conquest.

In modern nations we need behold but two instances presenting examples opposing each other, but which serve as our lesson.

There was England. She bore and survived the revolution from within of Cromwell against the king, then in later days met the attack of Napoleon's legions from without. These she hurled back in defeat at Waterloo, and returned to her islands to enjoy what she hoped would be a peaceful growth of prosperity and democracy.

France gathered herself from the shattered places and defiled temples that had shuddered and fallen in the revolution against the Louis. But glorious as was the survival over herself, this France, confiding again to the allurements of royalty, became languid in her security and corrupted through internal conspiracies, and was no longer the France that rose above her revolutions. France, refusing to be awakened to her dangers, declined to be alert to the vigilance necessary to the preservation of liberty; France was assailed from without by those who were watching the hour when the indifference of France or her decadence could invite the conflict. The assault came from Imperial Prussia, and France endured the humiliation of crowning a German King in Versailles, the palace of French sovereigns. From this defeat France, though rising to a sublime height and restored once again to liberty, equality, and fraternity, is now embattered with every weapon of assault that brutality of war can devise, and this from without, and this again from the once successful Imperial Prussia—encouraged by one victory and its profits Prussia tries for another and its glory.

The United States—our land of promise to man—after overcoming every attack which tribulation could visit upon struggling freedom, sat herself down in peace and in happiness to enjoy the house of her fathers—when lo, she, too, must march the course of nations and endure the trials decreed upon liberty. She was beset from within, and from the conflict of ideas upon State's rights and national sovereignty, she was torn between the ambition of leaders, and was brought to the sacrifice by the spirit of secession—by the misguided zealots of one side and a disloyal selfishness of the other—would have prospered upon the Nation's divisions. Against these the faithful Union sons and the loyal southern patriots fought and endured, and despite every suffering and opposed by every secret conspiracy put afoot against her patriot President, who was tortured by every criticism, the sons of the Union persevered, and through the fidelity and sacrifice of her children—under the guidance of Heaven—the Union was preserved and this land transmitted to its people as the Republic of United States, invincible and immortal.

Yet she, too, our United States, must pass under the rod! For it is written in the sacred warning to nations, spoken through the Book of Luke, "For the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee and compass thee around and would keep thee in on every side." From without was destined the shock against us—from envy of our situation, from jealousy of our prowess, hatred was aroused in the heart of others and vengeance sworn upon an altar of swords. America's institutions of freedom, inspiring mankind to her example, and awakening oppressed lands to follow her course if they would know liberty, inflamed the souls of the royal rulers of Prussia with fear and fired them to war of destruction upon all that America stood for and was living for. This to Prussia was necessary that it might avoid American influence upon the hearts of the liberty-loving German people. It was to intercept this country in her march of progress and to defeat her purpose to overthrow governments of sword and scepter and establish in their stead as a rule of government the will of man, imperial Prussia struck us from without with a blow that has killed our children, murdered our sons, and imperiled this Nation.

This assault from without now puts us to the test before the world that every nation that has aspired to freedom has had to meet from despots who live by the belief of a divine right of kings, and which have ever assailed liberty since the light of freedom broke upon nations. The drowning of our commerce, the shattering of our ships, the killing of our women and children, and the murdering of our sons were but the stroke of the destined sword held in the hand of fate for America. It was the coming sure event ordered to test us that we may be proven if we are true, that we shall be tried if we are worthy to be free. It was to hold up to the world whether the heart of selfishness or the soul of patriotism controlled our course and directed our destiny. The question is put before the world, to be answered only by our conduct, asking if we are a people who to avoid personal inconvenience and commercial loss would deliver our sons to death under the blow of kings and surrender our land to the oppression of tyranny. All civilization watches from its towers. All humanity hangs in suspense upon our resolve. Freedom herself is to live or die by the hour which America chooses. Time itself is asking of Creation: Shall America's resolve be democracy or death, or surrender and shame?—

Hark, freemen, what say ye to tyrant's taunt?

Well, here in this place we reply. We hear the blood-bespattered war lords of Prussia call to America to yield; to give her money, her property, and her honor to the demand of Germany for indemnities. We hear the Prussian military masters call upon America to fall to her knees in submission and surrender her holy birthright of liberty to the tyrant's demand and lie in dishonor at the foot of the conqueror. In response, in reply, in answer, we remind the blood-maddened Kaiser that even while yet young and weak, as against the attack of another kingly German—George of England—this people, then poor in possession yet rich in righteousness, defied this King and brought him to his surrender at Yorktown and established young America, free from kings and victorious against the assault of oppressors. In that hour America reaped the glory of immortality.

We will tell him of the days when with but a Navy of birch bark we met the force of imperious Napoleon, the war colossus of his time, and beat back the assault upon the freedom of our seas and established for our mankind the right to traverse and enjoy the oceans of God for all time. More, here and now we will remind the Kaiser and his legions of helmeted princes that when in sectional delirium our children turned upon their own families and would have consumed each other in internecine strife, leaving the Republic a severed skeleton of its once glorious self—Heaven, true to its guardianship of our people, after the point where valor and sacrifice had been wholly proven, stepped between and with celestial decree commanded the children to stack their arms of war and clasp each other in the arms of love. Yea, even as against our own will, this God of nations saved us for ourselves, that the judgment of time should be fulfilled—one united America, loyal to itself, faithful to God, to be the hope of oppressed nations and the salvation of a war-shattered world. It is these, where North, South, East, and West, in one phalanx, present arms to its Commander in Chief, the President of the United States salutes the flag of its Nation, and beholding the return of all its sons to their father's house, exclaims after the order of Philip to King John:

Now that her princes are come home again, come the three corners of the earth in arms, and we shall shock them. * * * For this America never did and never will lie at the proud foot of a conqueror.

We will tell the Kaiser—yea, and to all the despots of earth proclaim, that this united and blessed land is America—the one land of all earth, that in all its time, under the custody of God never knew defeat. It is this land that is yet to be saluted by kings and emperors as the invincible and triumphant United States of America!

Mr. President, here in our land our people stand horrified at the perfidy of the German war rulers, in their deceit and betrayal of mankind through the pretense of cry for peace. Our Nation beholds that Germany while advancing to the United States with the speech of a truce—and in effect bearing a flag of peace—and while the propositions of peace advanced by the President of the United States are suspended in the balance by the reply terms and counter offers of Germany, and while both are being weighed in the hearts of our people, and confidence in German professions of peace and good will to man is being extended by America, Germany, with the stealth of a hidden assassin, and with brutality of a savage, steals upon the ships carrying the boys of American mothers to a French port and shoots them to death,

drowning them in the frozen seas, and leaving them helpless to perish in their agonies as they sank in the ocean reddened with their blood. And this while the assassin was appealing to the world for consideration and crying to America for a friendship that should suspend attack while terms of peace were under deliberation. Let the world now know that this treachery of assassins, this murder under the cover of Christian advance, this stroke in the dark that killed the sons of this Republic while the people were yielding to the prayer of Germany for consideration, for all time ended any confidence that may have been given any Prussian promises or Prussian pretenses of peace and honor. Whatever prospect there was held out for peace in the German offer is now shown to have been a deception and ruse to murder, and ends forever the hope of a peace until Germany is beaten to where she obeys the instincts of humanity through fear and yields peace and gives justice through being crushed to where she is powerless for treachery and forced by helplessness to seek the mercy of mankind. If there is an American who now can do else than sacrifice every possession and every life to vindicate his Nation, and give victory her cause, may his tongue that would speak against her cleave to the roof of his mouth and his hand that would be lifted for his country's enemies wither at his side.

The hour calls to America, "Forward, Americans, avenge the cowardly murder of your sons!"

Thus we will demonstrate that we can live through the second stage that is inevitable to all nations in its struggle for freedom and the fight for justice. That we can meet the assault from without and overcome it as we have that from within, and come forth stronger and nobler, tried and truer, sublime in fidelity and victory—the pride of civilization and the wonder of the world. We will show to the earth where the name of commonwealth is past and gone over three fractions of the groaning globe, that

Still one great clime—of freedom
Which their fathers fought for and
Bequeathed—a heritage of heart and hand
And proud distinction from each other land—
Still one great clime—in full and free defense
Yet rears her crest, unconquered and sublime.

Senators, let us review for the joy the contemplation affords those nations of the earth which from darkness were awakened to the light of hope by the star of our Republic. Let us refresh ourselves in the joyous memory of those people who have come to enjoy liberty by the guidance of the United States and who now know justice for humanity from the inspiration and the aid of this first, true Republic of all time:

There is South America. Each and all of her lands and divisions this day free from oppression and her people, once bowed under the yoke of kings and emperors, now free to govern themselves by their own voice, their own will, and fulfilling the destiny that America had decreed for the peoples of the world through her example and her assistance—liberty of man and justice of nations. The islands of the sea, from Cuba to the Philippines, rescued from the hands of the despot, where they once bled in agony and drenched their doorways with the streaming tears of their wailing people. They to-day shout the pæans of liberty, their people walk with heads erect, no longer slaves but free men, while prosperity and liberty blesses them with its every endowment, and they stand before the earth equal to all men in all the present and equal to those who shall be hereafter the heirs of all the future.

Yea, China, after her soggy sleep of centuries, floundering in slavish submission, at last heard the call of America, and educated by the endowment of the United States in her gratuity and gift to China, as she returned the indemnity levied upon that confused country, that the money should go to the enlightenment of her people through public education, China, as a reward to America for this magnanimity, modeled her existence after the order of this young western mother, and in the form of a republic and in the spirit of a free government China struggles to obtain the stature of a free land with free men after the example and form of her inspiring friend, the Republic of the United States.

Russia, long in bondage of emperors and mortgaged to ignorance, her people yoked to serfdom through centuries of suffering and ages of oppression, turned and looked upon us and from the bosom of our magnanimity drew hope that it might live in freedom with justice. Russia, as one touched by the Divinity, broke its cerements of civil death, threw off its shackling coil, and as the children of Jove, sprung full-born in the arena of republics and reared itself to the height of American ideals, and Russia moved out to the command of

liberty shouting "Death to tyrants." Surely all America will behold all these offsprings of her birthright throughout the world and say in this generation, "It was good to be here."

Mr. President, whatever riches America has amassed from her industry, whatever wealth gathered from her commerce, what harvests garnered from her fields—are all as but the least of offering compared to that which she brings to civilization in the growth of liberty, the perfection of justice, and the expansion of freedom which she has been able by her example and her power, through her religion and her generousities, to endow mankind. Other nations have risen in triumph of power and lived for a while in the glory of arms, but by the selfish achievement—conquest of country through the slash of swords—they have fallen. As these wrenched victory by strength and success by power, they but showed the way to the rival wherein to multiply and by these same standards prevail. That which was victor yesterday was the conquered of to-day, and thus one after the other the powerful nations of the world, resting only upon the achievement of riches, the multiplication of wealth, and the power of the sword, have broken and melted away, leaving nothing enduring to which mankind appeals as example to follow or the children of men turn to as gods to be worshiped or praised.

Hear Ruskin echoing this truth:

Riches of Tyre, Thebes, and Carthage; yea, I say also the once Rome and great Persia are left for our beholding in the periods of their decline. They are ghosts upon the sands of the sea. Theirs was power, riches, grandeur; much for a country—nothing for man. They rose; they shined, yea glowed, laughed, persecuted, and oppressed, and then they died, and man asks not, where are they? nor cares that they live not among nations. As among men, there is to nations a justice of God and the vengeance of time.

Mr. President, refined civilization as it increases in its purpose of equality among men and justice to all peoples scorns the suggestion of accepting these dead nations of the past as models of national education or guides of personal conduct. The people of the modern world shun them and hold as their boast before earth how they disdain to pattern after them, and turning the face of all those that are new and hopeful to the one standard, approach the United States of America, and bowing in admiration, ask but to follow her past growth, hold her guiding hand, and walk beside her in the light of approving heaven.

Then who are they who misrepresent the purpose of democracy under Wilson that they may defeat all democracy to all men? These charge that America, under Wilson, would continue war to force Governments and people of foreign lands to take our form of government. Let the world know that as George Washington fought for democracy as a right to America and Thomas Jefferson proclaimed it as a necessity to mankind, while Lincoln made it his creed of emancipation for all color and all clime—so, too, Wilson fights for democracy as a right of the whole world. The promise of Wilson to "make the world safe for democracy" is no threat to make the world take democracy. It is but the assurance of the effort to give to the world its chance to take democracy. This war of America is the announcement that we, by our entrance into the conflict, will prevent any despot depriving any people from exercising their free will in rejecting despotism and choosing democracy. The United States does not fight to force any Government to adopt the theory of our Government, nor does the United States fight to force any foreign people to take our form of government against any form of government they may choose for themselves. But America does fight to prevent any foreign Government thwarting any land from enjoying democracy if it so wills by the voice of its own people. And this United States fights now and will ever fight to the expenditure of its last dollar and the sacrifice of every son, rather than submit to any monarch wresting our democracy from us, to the death of our liberty, and the end of our Republic.

How old, how sacred in years and teaching, is this noble creed.

Hear Cicero proclaiming to Rome to go out and aid the peoples foreign to her dominion to enjoy democracy and happiness, saying:

It is more consonant to nature to undertake the greatest labors and to undergo the severest trouble for the preservation and advantage of all nations, if such a thing could be accomplished, than to live in solitary repose surrounded with the allurements of pleasure and wealth. There are those who admit that regard for justice and liberty to the citizen for the benefit of his commonwealth, but deny that this regard ought to be extended in favor of foreigners. Such persons would destroy the society of the human race.

It was this theme which Edmund Burke took as the hope and succor of Britain when in her great hour of tribulation—when

emperors of combined Europe threatened her hope of democracy—he, addressing the Lords and Commons, said:

My Lords, it has pleased Providence to place us in such a state that we appear every moment to be on the verge of some great mutation. There is one thing and one thing only that defies mutation—that which existed before the world itself—I mean justice—that justice which emanating from divinity has a place in the breast of every one of us—given us for our guide with regard for ourselves, and with regard to others and will stand after this globe is burned to ashes—our advocate or our accuser before the Great Judge, when He comes to call upon us for the tenor of a well-spent life.

Mr. President, surely this young Nation has proven worthy of the faith of her fathers and as being justified of her children. For this, in this hour of the Nation's peril, she presents herself as entitled to the union of support of all her citizens and to be given the love and comfort of every daughter, the sacrifice and life of every son. Let us believe that, as the Heavenly Father, viewing His celestial Son approaching the sacred water with which He was to be baptized, that he might present His example of cleanly righteousness to all earth, proclaimed: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He, too, views our land, seeing it in all that it has lived through, beholding it for all that it stands for, and knowing

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its sacrifices and achievements that man may live in liberty, trumpets to earth His praise, exclaiming: "This is My beloved daughter, in whom I am well pleased."

Senators, as the worshipers make their pilgrimage to the sacred shrine of their gods for the revival of their faith and the refreshment of their souls, so here we assemble to pledge our devotion to free government and free men; to swear anew our allegiance to America and vow our eternal sacrifice of life, property, and sacred honor that liberty shall live and democracy survive. And so, rising over our foes, we rejoice to behold ourselves as the world acknowledges us, a just people, freed from every impulse of selfish gain, a Nation clean of every ignoble design, and a Republic offering all in sacrifice for justice to man and liberty to nations. Here we stand, as stand we shall, as the fulfilled promise of time and the realized hope of earth—America justified in the praise of men and glorified in the blessings of God.

Mr. President, at a later hour I shall make the appropriate motion for an adjournment. At this time I pause and yield to those who will follow me, expressing my very grateful thanks for the appreciation of the Senate. [Applause by Senators.]