

## WILSON ASKS FOR AUTHORITY TO ARM

REQUESTS RIGHT OF CONGRESS  
TO RESIST GERMAN SUB-  
MARINE MENACE.

## COMMERCE AT A STANDSTILL

Continued Invasions of American  
Rights: Force President Into  
Next Step Toward War.

Washington—President Wilson appeared before congress at 1 o'clock Monday afternoon and asked for authority to place the United States in a state of "armed neutrality" to resist the German submarine menace.

Continued invasion of the plain rights of neutrals in high seas, further sacrifices of American lives and ships, the intolerable blockade of American commerce—almost as effective as if the country were at war—have taken the place of a dreaded "overt act" which was expected to shock the world—and have forced the President into the next step to ward war.

President Wilson's address to congress was as follows:

Gentlemen of the Congress: I have again asked you for the privilege of addressing you because we are moving through critical times during which it seems to me to be my duty to keep in close touch with the houses of congress so that neither counsel nor action shall run at cross purposes between us.

On the third of February I officially informed you of the sudden and unexpected action of the imperial German government in declaring its intention to disregard the promises it had made to this government in April last and undertake immediate submarine operations against all commerce whether of belligerent or of neutral nations that would seek to approach Great Britain and Ireland, the Atlantic coast of Europe, or the harbors of the eastern Mediterranean and to conduct those operations without regard to the established restrictions of international practice, without regard to any considerations of humanity upon which might interfere with their conduct.

This policy was forthwith put into practice.

It has now been in active execution for nearly four weeks.

### Other Nations Silent.

Its practical results are not fully disclosed. The commerce of other neutral nations is suffering severely, but not, perhaps, very much more severely than it was suffering before the first of February, when the new policy of the imperial government was put into operation.

We have asked the co-operation of the other neutral governments to prevent license, depredations, but I fear none of them has thought it wise to join us in any common course of action.

Our own commerce has suffered, is in fact, rather because so many of our ships are in apprehension than their home ports that because American ships have been sunk.

### Reckless Ruthless Acts.

"Two American vessels have been sunk, the Houmatonic and the Lynan M. Law. The case of the Houmatonic, which was carrying foodstuffs consigned to a London firm, was especially like the case of the Frye, in which it will be recalled, the German government admitted its liability for damages, and the lives of the crew, as in the case of the Frye, were safeguarded with reasonable care.

The case of the Law which was carrying demob-box staves to Palermo disclosed a ruthlessness of method which deserves grave condemnation, but was accompanied by circumstances which might not have been expected at any time in connection with the use of submarines against merchantmen as the German government has used.

In sum, therefore, the situation we find ourselves in with regard to the actual conduct of the German submarine warfare against commerce and its effects upon our own ships and people is substantially the same as that when I addressed you on the third of February except for the tying up of our shipping in our own ports because of the unwillingness of our shipowners to risk their vessels at sea without insurance or adequate protection, and the very serious congestion of our commerce which has resulted, a congestion which is growing rapidly more and more serious every day.

### U. S. Congestion Serious.

This in itself might presently accomplish in effect, what the new German submarine orders were meant to accomplish, so far as we are concerned.

We can only say, therefore, that the overt act which I have ventured to hope the German commanders would in fact avoid, has not occurred.

But while this is happening, it must be admitted that there have been certain additional indications and expressions of purpose on the part of the German press and the German authorities which have increased rather than lessened the impression that if our ships and our people are spared it will be because of fortunate circumstances or because the commanders of the German submarines which

they may happen to encounter exercise an unexpected discretion and restraint rather than because of instructions under which those commanders are acting.

### Crisis Is Dangerous.

It would be foolish to deny that the situation is fraught with the gravest possibilities and dangers. No thoughtful man can fail to see that the necessity for definite action may come at any time, if we are in fact, and not in word merely, to defend our elementary rights as a neutral nation. It would be most imprudent to be unprepared.

I cannot, in such circumstances be unmindful of the fact that the expiration of the term of the present congress is immediately at hand, by constitutional limitation, and that it would entail likelihood require an unusual length of time to assemble and organize the congress which is to succeed it.

I feel that I ought, in view of that fact to obtain from you full and immediate assurance of the authority which I may need at any moment to exercise.

### Wants Congress Backing.

No doubt I already possess that authority without special warrant of law, by the plain implication of my constitutional duties and powers; but I prefer, in the present circumstances, not to act upon general implications, I wish to feel that the authority and the power of the congress are behind me in whatever it may become necessary for me to do. You are jointly the servants of the people and must act together and in their spirit, so far as we can define and interpret it.

No one doubts what it is our duty to do. We must defend our commerce and the lives of our people in the midst of the present trying circumstances with discretion, but with clear and steadfast purpose. Only the method and the extent remain to be chosen, upon the occasion, if occasion should indeed arise. Since it has unhappily proved impossible to safeguard our neutral rights by diplomatic means against the unwarranted infringements which are suffering at the hands of Germany, there may be no recourse but to armed neutrality, which we shall now how to maintain and for which there is abundant American precedent.

I am not now proposing or contemplating war or any steps that need lead to it.

I merely request that you will accord me by your own vote and definite bestowal the means and the authority to safeguard in practice the peace and who are desirous of exercising none but the rights of peace to follow the pursuit of peace in quietness and good will—rights recognized time out of mind by all the civilized nations of the world.

No course of my choosing or of theirs will lead to war.

War can come only by the willful acts and aggressions of others.

### Asks Arms and Money.

You will understand, why I can make no definite proposal or forecast of action, and must ask for your supporting authority in the most general terms. The form in which action may become necessary cannot yet be foreseen. I believe that the people will be willing to trust me to act with restraint, with prudence, and in the true spirit of amity and good faith that they have themselves displayed throughout these trying months; and is in that belief that I request that you will authorize me to supply our merchant ships with defensive arms should that become necessary and with the means of using them, and to employ any other instrumentalities and measures that may be necessary and adequate to protect our ships and our people in our legitimate and peaceful pursuits on the seas.

I request also that you will grant me at the same time, along with the powers I ask, a sufficient credit to enable me to provide adequate means of protection where they are lacking, including adequate insurance against the present war risks.

I have spoken of our commerce and of the legitimate errands of our people on the seas, but you will not be misled as to my main thought, the thought that lies behind these phrases, and gives them dignity and weight. It is not of material interest merely that we are thinking. It is, rather, of fundamental human rights, chief of all, the right of life itself.

### Pleads for Humanity.

I am thinking not only of the rights of Americans to go and come about their proper business, but of the rights of all men, but also something much deeper, much more fundamental than that. I am thinking of those rights of humanity without which there is no civilization. My theme is of those great principles of compassion and of protection which mankind has sought to throw about human lives, the lives of non-combatants, the lives of men who are peacefully at work to advance the industrial processes of the world, the lives of women and children, and of those who supply the labor which ministers to their sustenance.

We are speaking of no selfish material rights, but of rights which our hearts support, and whose foundation is that righteous passion for justice upon which all men of good conscience alike of faith, of state, and of mankind must rest, so upon the ultimate base of our existence and our liberty. I cannot imagine any man with American principles at his heart hesitating to defend these things.

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## Detroit Theatres

**Detroit Opera House.**  
Mrs. Flak, whose coming to Detroit is always an event of moment to the city, will appear at the Detroit Opera House next week in a comedy entitled "Erst-".

It is a recital of quaint characters and amusing episodes of the Dutch in their amusing and romantic settlements that is in no sense a caricature. The graphic touch of these little known parts of the country.

## Garrick Theatre.

All-John et al. in "Robinson Crusoe Jr." The New York winter garden special, laden with Al-John and his fellow remakes in "Robinson Crusoe Jr." will play next week also at the Garrick. The demand for seats has been so great that the management has been obliged to two weeks.

## Washington Theatre.

This dramatization of Jules Verne's widely read novel has been made up of the best of the quarter of a million dollars and has been the service of 2,000 actors, many of whom took their lives in their hands when they went beneath the surface of the ocean to play their appointed roles.

## Gaiety Theatre.

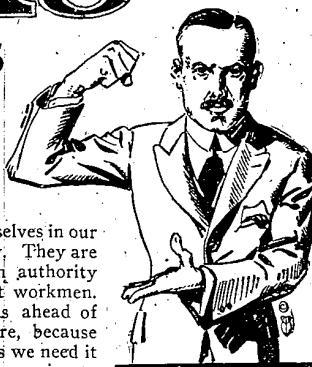
Abbe Raynolds, Jewish character actor, and George Hayes, the principal comedians in "The Merry Females" will play next week at the Gaiety March 4.

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so much to congress as to the demagogues who are setting forth the advantages of a \$250 automobile.

It is claimed that the newspaper articles on managing husbands are all written by spinsters. The married women know how, but aren't giving away any information.

No opposition to war is reported on the part of the men who have sold storage products several years old to sell to the army.