

United States as any man in the inner circle at Washington. He is the kind of man who keeps a pad and pencil by his bed and wakes up very early in the morning and writes a letter to the President with new ideas in it which he thinks ought to be put across. And, phew! how easy it is to get the President to read it! McAdoo is a thinker with a mind that works day and night. And a constructive thinker, too. He woke up in the night with a merchant shipping programme in his brain in the very month of 1914 in which war was declared. And he secured the assent of the President and tried to get his programme through at once, but it was long afterwards before the men of conservative mind of both parties in Congress saw the need. And the final success of the Federal Reserve Act and the democratization of that Act—that was McAdoo and Wilson. And now the Governmental control and operation of railways—the Director-General is McAdoo. The railway is a problem that he has studied for many years; and he had far less trepidation in tackling it than he had about entering upon his duties as Secretary of the Treasury. McAdoo has not the reputation of being beloved of some New York financiers nor of the conservatives in

the Senate, but it would be very illuminating if the country could get the sweep and power of his personality in his recent testimony before the Senate Committee on Finance or the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committees of Congress. He bowled all his cross-examiners over as easily as if he were the original expert in ten-strikes.

The distinguished head of the power group is the President. And with the verdict of history upon the mental method and inner nature of his great personality, of course the record of the whole power group will stand or fall. He is now the master interpreter of the practical international moralities. Thus Europe acclaims him. Did he orient himself in the international crisis too late? Was a man of quicker instinctive insight needed in the leadership of the country? His supporters everywhere maintain that he was at all times fully abreast of the rapidly broadening conviction of the Nation, and that for weal or woe no faster progress toward the salvage of the world could have been made than was made under his leadership. If the world is saved, that judgment of his supporters will stand in history.

Washington, February 26, 1918.

DARE WE DICKER FOR PEACE?

BY JOSEPH H. ODELL

LOOMING up on the horizon of National consciousness is the possibility of a negotiated peace—what William Roscoe Thayer¹ has warned us against as a “Judas Peace.” The people realize its presence, they shrink from it as from a monstrous spiritual menace, they loathe it as the thing that may make all of their chivalry and sacrifice vain, they dread it as the one and only door through which dishonor can come to the American name, they feel instinctively that its only legacy to the world will be a “potter’s field.” They feel, however, that it is possible, and this is beginning to fall like a nightmare upon the National spirit. They know that many apparently altruistic reasons can be given for wooing its closer approach. They understand that its ultimate disaster to mankind can be hidden under immediate humanitarian sophistries. For Americans are in the war body, mind, soul, wealth, and they do not want and do not mean to crawl out of the war until the one object for which they entered it has been achieved—to crush militaristic autocracy, or, in President Wilson’s admirable phrase, “to make the world safe for democracy.” Their decision is final, and they will damn any form of diplomacy which seeks to deflect them from that splendid dedication.

But this feeling is instinctive, intuitive, and inarticulate; the people need to be interpreted to themselves. When they see in clear and concise words the sentiments and convictions which are stirring in their minds and hearts they give quick and emphatic assent. Up to the delivery of his “Fourteen Points” speech of January 8, 1918, President Wilson was the clarion voice that spoke for the people; his speech of that date and his address of February 11, 1918, they are not quite able to harmonize. This does not mean that the people have abated their loyalty to the President, but simply that for the time being he has ceased to speak their language. He may not have made himself perfectly clear, or the people may have failed to understand his object. Nevertheless they feel that the measured tones of diplomacy used in the January and February speeches are not the outpouring of their souls.

In the first place, the American people are convinced that even if Austria-Hungary seems to be more compliant and reasonable to-day it is only a pose assumed at the dictation of Germany. As late as December, 1917, Count Czernin made this significant and conclusive statement:

We are fighting for the defense of Germany, just as Germany is fighting for our defense. In this respect I know no territorial boundaries. If any one should ask whether we are fighting for

¹The distinguished American historian whose “Life of Cavour” is now the standard and authoritative work on the achievement of Italian unity and popular liberty. His article entitled “Beware of a Judas Peace” appeared in the “Saturday Evening Post” for February 16.

Alsace-Lorraine, I would reply yes; we are fighting for Alsace-Lorraine, just as Germany is fighting for us and fought for Lemberg and Trieste. *I know no difference between Strassburg and Trieste.*

Those words give America its ultimatum: the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs have an indissoluble pact. France is never to have Alsace-Lorraine and Italy is never to have Trieste on any terms.

According to Chancellor von Hertling, Germany is still more resolute in the matter of territory, for he said late in January, “We will never permit ourselves to be robbed of Alsace-Lorraine.” And, unless we have entirely misunderstood his speech, von Hertling would not even discuss the question of Belgium until the Allies are ready to accept unconditionally the integrity of all enemy territory as “the only possible foundation for peace negotiations.” That is, we must abandon the Arabs and Armenians and Syrians to the gracious and gentle ministrations of Turkey before Germany will even talk about evacuating Belgium and northern France. To speak of peace terms, with Germany still in that mood, is as if a lamb were to discuss internal politics with a lion.

The Chancellor’s speech before the Reichstag February 25 was more subtle but infinitely more dangerous. Von Hertling verbally assented to President Wilson’s “Four Principles,” given February 11, but in such a way that his only purpose could have been to drive a wedge between the United States and Great Britain. England, he contends, must agree to Mr. Wilson’s phrase, “All well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction,” by giving up Ireland, Egypt, and India before Germany can put the “Four Principles” into effect and evacuate Belgium. It looks as if two were playing the same game of “driving the wedge,” and von Hertling had all the advantage. In the meantime Germany is eating her way into the heart of Russia and knocking the Ten Commandments and international law to smithereens. Forty-three months have passed since Germany began to smash laws, human and divine, on the Belgian frontier—forty-three months of perfidy, outrage, and dishonor, forty-three months without a single virtue to redeem the black record—and yet some are willing to listen to the voice of Berlin as though it were the voice of an equal!

President Wilson sent his reply to his Holiness Pope Benedict XV, on August 27, 1917, and the concluding paragraph stands out as the mind of America then and the mind of America now:

We cannot take the word of the present rulers of Germany as a guarantee of anything that is to endure, unless explicitly

supported by such conclusive evidence of the will and purpose of the German people themselves as the other peoples of the world would be justified in accepting. Without such guarantees treaties of settlement, agreements for disarmament, covenants to set up arbitration in the place of force, territorial adjustments, reconstitutions of small nations, if made with the German Government, no man, no nation, could now depend on. We must await some new evidence of the purposes of the great peoples of the Central Powers. God grant it may be given, and in a way to restore the confidence of all peoples everywhere in the faith of nations and the possibility of a covenanted peace.

What have the people of the Central Powers done recently that might restore confidence? A momentary strike on regulation trade-union lines in Germany, and doubtless much magnified by the German censor in transmission for its effect on American morale! Germany gay with bunting over the latest and most dastardly perfidy of German autocracy—the indecent rape of prostrate Russia! President Wilson described Germany, December 4, 1917, as “*the German Power, a Thing without conscience or honor or capacity, for covenanted peace.*” Germany is still that, and has proved it in its cowardly and conscienceless treatment of Russia since the opening of 1918. Let us understand clearly what has occurred: Russia went into the Brest-Litovsk parley on the explicit understanding of negotiating peace on the basis of “no annexations, no indemnities, and the self-determination of peoples.” Germany, in entering the conference, accepted the terms. Germany began to haggle about Poland and Courland. Lenine and Trotsky were helpless, vacillating, and inefficient. The Bolsheviki hesitated, wavered, and surrendered. True, they did not make peace, but they declared the war to be at an end, and began to demobilize the Russian armies. Then Germany boldly threw off the mask and marched her waiting forces on a four-hundred-mile front straight into Russia, paying no more attention to the self-determination of the Russian or Polish peoples than a snake pays to the self-determination of a fatally fascinated bird—von Hertling’s subsequent statement concerning Courland and Poland to the contrary notwithstanding.

Germany has changed since August, 1914, only for the worse. Every vile and disreputable and treacherous thing that a nation could do Germany has done and in deepening degree as the months have passed. If America enters into any kind of negotiations for peace with an undefeated Germany, America will be tricked and betrayed even as Russia has been. While Germany has a sword in her hand she is incapable of a covenanted peace. And if Germany can trick and betray America through the simulated compliance of Austria, Germany will surely do it. And some of the American people are afraid that the first innings of the game are being played.

In the second place, the American people are resolutely determined to overthrow the militaristic autoeracy of Germany. President Wilson fixed that determination in the mind and soul of the Nation in a series of magnificent addresses and state papers during the first nine months of the war. By that determination the people now stand and they refuse to abate it in any degree; for they know that a peace made on any other terms will be a decisive German victory. The Allies are in no position to barter; Germany has swept up most of the stakes and has abrogated all the rules of the game. Belgium, northern France, Serbia, most of Rumania, northern Italy, and all of eastern Russia are in Germany’s hands. To offset all of these the Allies hold only a few remote and potentially valuable colonies which Germany was just beginning to develop. If the war should end now by negotiation, France would not receive Alsace-Lorraine—German victory! If the war should end now, Italy would not recover Trieste and the Austrian outlying lands inhabited by Italian people—German victory! If the war should end now, German influence would be paramount through Middle Europe and at least as far as the Taurus Mountains—German victory! If the war should end now, Serbia, Montenegro, and Rumania would remain at the mercy of Austria-Hungary and Turkey—German victory! If the war should end now, there would be no chance of the southern Slavonic peoples coming to any form of self-determining nationality—German victory! If the war should end now, ruthless submarine warfare against neutrals, aerial bombardment of unfortified places,

the misuse of prisoners of war, and a score of other atrocities would be justified as the successful means to an end—German victory! That is, whatever withdrawals there might be from Belgium and northern France, and whatever compensation might be paid for the destruction of property in those areas, nevertheless Germany would be the unmistakable victor in the war and would be satisfied with the achievement. This the American people cannot contemplate and will not tolerate.

Beyond these considerations, Americans realize that we went into the war for something very different from territorial technicalities. They know that we went into the war for a purpose much greater than to protect our own invaded or violated rights. While it is true that the specific grounds for our action were enumerated as the sinking of our vessels, the destruction of the property of our citizens, restrictions put upon our commerce, and the killing of Americans while they were exercising their rights of travel upon the high seas, the Nation realized that we had become the champion of things more universal. In the President’s words on April 2, 1917:

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a Government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world. We are now about to accept gauge of battle with *this natural foe to liberty*, and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the Nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power.

Nothing has changed the situation since that fateful day except such additional acts of autocratic brutality and lawlessness as but strengthen our purpose. We have come to see that the war cannot be won unless we win it, and democracy cannot remain domiciled in the world unless our might makes its tenure secure. A negotiated peace at this time, or in the near future, means that all the heroic and sacrificial endeavors of our allies will have gone for naught. No matter how great our horror at the thought of our sons and brothers falling thick upon the battlefield, we are so placed now that we cannot assume the initiative in negotiating peace without meriting the shame of having deserted Belgium, France, Britain, and Serbia after they have poured out their life on our behalf. Four hundred miles of blood-sodden land, from the North Sea to the Swiss border, has become the only line of honor on which Americans can stand. The story of Louvain and Liège makes Thermopylæ seem pale; shall all that Belgian crimson splendor go for naught? Shall the imperishable deeds of the Marne and Verdun be thrown away in a lusterless barter? Shall Ypres and the Somme be counted as the last forlorn hope of the Anglo-Saxon while we dicker for immunity, protected by the British fleet? Americans will not have it so; we must go on, though the costs be staggering; we must and shall go on until our armies have broken the frightful power of the Hohenzollern and the Hapsburg, and until with pride we can hand to our allies the rights and franchises of liberty to which we ourselves lay claim. A negotiated peace with this unaccomplished would be treason to humanity.

In the third place, Americans are asking why this talk of a negotiated peace should be creeping through the land. They know it cannot have sprung from the Marquis of Lansdowne’s indiscreet letter of November 30, 1917. Are there any reasons why America should move for peace by negotiation? If so, the people ought to know them immediately. As no authoritative statement has been given, guesses have been freely made. They are somewhat as follows:

1. *That German propaganda has penetrated America, through pacifists, through Austria’s simulation, and through such channels as Ireland, Holland, and the Vatican; and that it has succeeded in modifying the stern front America presented to the Central Powers up to the close of 1917.*

This surmise is the most difficult of all to disprove, because we have had no ringing declaration of our primal dedication since the beginning of the present year. If President Wilson would announce to the people that every phrase and sentence of his thrilling speech of December 4, 1917, still stands, unmodulated and unabated and un glossed, we could say without a quaver that we shall go on until the Teuton demon is exorcised

from the body politic of the world. Americans continue to quote from the December 4 speech :

Let it be said again that autocracy must first be shown the utter futility of its claims to power or leadership in the modern world. It is impossible to apply any standard of justice so long as such forces are unchecked and *undefeated* as the present masters of Germany command. *Not until that has been done can right be set up as arbiter and peacemaker among the nations.* But when that has been done—as, God willing, it assuredly will be—we shall at last be free to do an unprecedented thing, and this is the time to avow our purpose to do it. We shall be free to base peace on generosity and justice to the exclusion of all selfish claims to advantage even on the part of the victors.

Let there be no misunderstanding. *Our present and immediate task is to win the war, and nothing shall turn us aside until it is accomplished.* Every power and resource we possess, whether of men, or money, or of materials, is being devoted to that purpose until it is achieved. Those who desire to bring peace about before that purpose is achieved I counsel to carry their advice elsewhere. We will not entertain it.

So, if President Wilson has not absolutely and radically changed his mind since last December, it is certain that the German peace propaganda must be in vain. And the people of America still stand dedicated upon the President's platform: "*Our present and immediate task is to win the war, and nothing shall turn us aside until it is accomplished.*" "*Not until that has been done can right be set up as arbiter and peacemaker among the nations.*" We will talk peace only when the militaristic autocracy admits defeat.

2. *That France and Great Britain are reaching the point where they cannot depend upon the loyalty of labor at home, therefore an early peace on the best possible terms should be negotiated—America opening the way.*

This rumor is contrary to the facts. On December 19, 1917, the Socialist group in the French Chamber of Deputies sent a letter to their fellow-Socialists in Russia pleading with the revolutionists not to betray their allies by making a separate peace with Germany. They wrote: "And we French Socialists, who find in the seriousness of events and in the consciousness of our responsibilities the inspiration for these friendly declarations, we do not hesitate to say to you: we also realize the extent of our duties. French Socialists will do nothing to weaken the resistance of the army and people of France, but rather strengthen the morale of both, and forcefully implore the Allied Governments that they clearly indicate by actions their oft-repeated declarations that they are fighting because they are attacked, and that they would obtain no peace other than that of right." Never for a moment has the French Government found reason for doubting the continued loyalty of the French Socialists.

So far as British labor is concerned, the decision of the British Labor party on December 28 seemed to be so final that it was accepted by the Inter-Allied Labor Conference in London on February 22, on which occasion Leader Arthur Henderson said: "We are willing to negotiate with the enemy, but not with an olive branch in our hands while he clutches a sword in both of his. No, we look into the future and regard the problem with the seriousness and importance it demands. Both sides must be prepared to accept a solution which will have for its main object the destruction of militarism." After the experience of the Bolsheviks with German treachery it is quite safe to say that neither French nor British labor will play the Kaiser's game, by faltering in allegiance to its own Government.

3. *That American military authorities, after a survey of the battle-ground, believe that the German front is too strong to be broken and the German army is too strong to be defeated.*

If that is true, some one whose word cannot be doubted should announce the decision to the American people at once, and in terms blunt and clear. If it is true that all the skill and resources of France, Great Britain, and Italy, plus all the skill and resources of the United States, cannot break the German power, then the sooner we know it the better. It means that democracy has failed in the presence of autocracy, that might is stronger than right, that liberty and justice can continue in the world only on sufferance granted by tyranny. If it is true,

we ought to know it immediately, and abandon our futile dreams and settle down to the nasty but inevitable business of living as serfs.

But the American people will never accept such a conclusion, and they will never sanction a negotiated peace on the assumption that it is true. Possibly the war may not be won in 1918, but if not then it may be won in 1919, and even if not then 1920 will see the achievement. We have at least twenty million men of fighting age available for the front lines, and by 1919 or 1920 we can have them so adequately equipped and munitioned that they will ultimately crush the German front like an eggshell. That is, we have everything necessary for finally defeating autocracy, and we would rather take two, three, or four years of unparalleled effort in doing it than to bring our soldiers home and leave the brutal Kaiser to stride across Europe and Asia chanting his hymn of hate and blasphemously appropriating the Almighty while he and his kin wallow in blood and lust. We are going to win this war in fair fight or brand ourselves as cowards and defaulters for all time.

4. *That our Government is falling down in the matter of war equipment production—shipping, munitions, armament, aircraft—and an early negotiated peace would hide our shame and save our face.*

Perhaps there have been vacillation and confusion, misdirection and fossilization, in some of our departments; perhaps we may fail to keep our schedule in ship-building or machine guns or high explosives or aircraft; perhaps the stupidity of our two years and a half of false security and unpreparedness may exact an awful toll in flesh and blood; perhaps all these things and more. But France was not ready when hell broke over her, and England paid for her prejudice against modern high explosives to the extent of a quarter of a million precious lives. We cannot flinch and falter as a Nation because some of our bureaucrats blundered. We dare not betray the world future of democracy because some of our officials tumbled over their office furniture.

Washington had blunders and blunderers enough to contend with, God knows; but he did not negotiate peace until Cornwallis proffered the hilt of his sword at Yorktown. Lincoln had deficiencies and inefficiencies enough, God knows; but he set his face like a flint against a negotiated peace until Lee stood in unconditional surrender at Appomattox. That was the breed of the men who gave America its proud place among the nations and predestinated it to be the savior of democracy, and it will be hard to persuade Americans that the strain has faded out of the race. It was only after the maximum of deliberation that America entered the war, and with the maximum of determination America will stay in the war. We will correct our mistakes, repair our blunders, speed up our machinery, redouble our energy, multiply our sacrifices, and we will stay with our gallant allies, encouraging them and reinforcing them, until we crush what President Wilson has called "*the German power, a Thing without conscience or honor or capacity for covenanted peace.*"

Lead on, Mr. President, lead on to the battlefield; a united, dedicated Nation will follow you. Lead on to victory; the eyes of the entire world are focused on you and the hopes of all the peoples for ages to come are dependent on your resolution. Lead on, and fulfill the pledges which America gave to God as they fell from your lips in your great speeches of 1917.

[Press despatches from correspondents in Washington who are close to the Administration have appeared in the daily papers saying that President Wilson is about to declare to Congress the country, and the world that Germany's evident purpose of territorial conquest in Russia shows the necessity of overthrowing her band of autocratic and militaristic rulers by the power of the Allied armies. Such a declaration by the President may be made before this issue of The Outlook reaches our readers. We earnestly hope so. It seems to us the only conclusion to which enlightened statesmanship can come. Reason has been appealed to without success. The final appeal is to the sword. A final and conclusive declaration to this effect by the President would be welcomed and loyally supported throughout the country.—THE EDITORS.]

THE HERALDS OF SPRING

BY JEAN BROOKE BURT

Wild geese out of the southland,
Flying heralds of spring,
Following low on the river's course,
What does your coming bring?
Running of snows in the canyon,
Creeks that are mad with mirth,
Poignant stirring of growing things,
And scent of the good plowed earth.

Cool, glad mornings of April,
Dawns when the wind rides free,
Pines that are warmed with sunlight,
These are the things to be.
Wild geese out of the southland,
Herald the news as you fly!
Sing the song of the young green earth,
Gray wings spread to the sky!

MOBILIZING 'RASTUS

BY LIEUTENANT CHARLES C. LYNDE

"NAME?" asked the captain, as he glanced up at the denim-clad Negro on the other side of the desk. "Tass," the man replied, shifting uneasily from one foot to the other as the officers in the registering line looked at him.

"Tass who?" queried the lieutenant at the service record desk.

"Po-Potassium Aceta' Smith, Cap'n."

At the full name the lieutenant laid down his pen with a hearty laugh.

"Potassium Acetate Smith," he repeated, slowly. "We ought to transfer that boy to the medical department, if only on account of his drug-store name."

The officers were a part of the force enrolling the draft quotas in the Negro division being formed as a portion of the National Army. All day they had been struggling with incomplete registration records, improperly filled out designations of beneficiaries, and slighted physical examination cards. The weather was unusually cold for the time of year, and the incoming men were thinly clad and sluggish from two or three days' ride in day coaches. In consequence, their answers to the questions of the registrars were vague, and the officers' tempers were worn down to the breaking-point by the time "Tass" was enrolled.

The general laugh that followed Potassium's assignment relieved the tension, and the waiting list was all properly recorded and sent to temporary quarters before dark. Qualification cards, involved forms covering almost every possible civilian occupation, were left over until the company organizations were completed, at which time they would be filled in with a detailed history of the man's labor over all of his bread-winning life—the card to be used by the personnel office in fitting the man to the branch of the service where his qualifications and experience would count for the most to the Government and the soldier. All other records, however, were cared for as the men entered, and a complete physical examination given each recruit to determine the accuracy of the Draft Board doctor's findings.

Potassium Acetate, together with some fifty-odd of his fellows, was marched over to one of the outlying barracks, and his military training begun. Single file the men marched past the door of the supply room and clean underclothing, soap, towels, and a suit of blue denim overalls—fatigue uniforms, in the service nomenclature—were issued to them. The line entered one door of the barracks and was ushered out through the other to the bath-house. A shower-bath, with plenty of hot water, was required of each recruit. Most of the men welcomed the opportunity for bathing, though the cold shower ordered at the finish was slighted as far as possible under the deterrent eye of the watchful commanding officer.

There were those, however, who refused to bathe, alleging pains, sickness, weak hearts, or other imaginary ailments as reasons why the bath should be foregone. These cases were settled by reference to the physical examination report cards, and if the remarks under the heading "State of General Health" showed no valid excuse, men who were already stripped were delegated as *masseurs pro tem*. These assignments were received with great hilarity by the bathers, one man remarking:

"I've been a car-cleaner on the railway for seven years, and Ah knows Ah's gwine scrub me one nigger clean, effen he ain't got respect 'nough for the United States Army to do hit hisse'f!" And he did.

Many of the darkies evidently had never before met a shower-bath, and after the ablutions were finished one of them approached the lieutenant in charge to ask if he might take "one of them there shower pipes" every day. In the course of the conversation which followed the man admitted that he never before had been wet all over at once, except the time he fell off a gangplank into the Mississippi River.

Following mess call, for what, from the avidity displayed at the tables, must have been the first square meal in several days, bed sacks were issued to the men and they were instructed to fill them with straw. Thirty pounds per man was the allowance, and bales were divided to approximate that amount. It was dark at the time the ticks were filled, and supervision of the stuffing was difficult. At inspection of barracks the next morning bed sacks of all descriptions were found—some filled at one end, others in the middle, and a few in which the owners had merely stowed away the sections of bale as given them, and had used the lumpy tick thus formed.

At sick call that morning, blown immediately after reveille, one recruit reported severe pains all over his back—"misery," he called it. On the theory that sick-call malingering could be checked only by examining personally each case up for medical attention, the lieutenant ordered the man to take off his shirt. It was removed, revealing a back crisscrossed at regular intervals by ridges and furrows.

"How long have you been this way?" asked the commanding officer.

"All night, suh lieutenant," was the reply; "didn't get no rest 'tall, mah back was a-hurtin' me so. Anyways I try to sleep 'pear to me like dat misery 'd get worse. I ain't used to dese here army beds nohow!"

The last remark, about the army bed, solved the puzzle. The man had filled his bed sack properly, and then had spread a blanket over the wire springs of his cot and crawled under the tick to sleep. Naturally the springs left their imprint on his body, with some two hundred and twenty pounds of avoirdupois to counteract the slight padding effect of one blanket.

The first two meals were prepared from anything that was available, and the men were fed much as they would have been cared for on the march. At the first opportunity kitchen equipment and supplies were taken over from a company whose men had all been transferred, the lieutenant personally supervising the checking of material from one kitchen to the other. Among the articles listed was one bottle, pint size, of lemon extract. It was noted as being loaded on the transfer truck, but failed to put in an appearance when the property was checked into the new kitchen. All the men of the transfer detail were questioned, but none even remembered having seen the bottle, much less knowing anything concerning its later whereabouts. There the matter was apparently dropped.

After supper the organization was called together to hear a short talk by the commanding officer. But instead of giving the expected lecture on the care of the feet, the C. O. announced