

CONTRIBUTION TOWARD THE ADORNMENT OF THE PEACE  
PALACE AT THE HAGUE.

---

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

**A REPORT FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE CONCERNING THE  
WISH EXPRESSED BY THE SECOND HAGUE CONFERENCE  
THAT APPROPRIATE CONTRIBUTION BE MADE BY EACH  
GOVERNMENT TOWARD THE ADORNMENT OF THE PEACE  
PALACE AT THE HAGUE.**

---

DECEMBER 15, 1908.—Read; referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and  
ordered to be printed.

---

*To the Senate and House of Representatives:*

I transmit herewith for the consideration of Congress a report from the Secretary of State, with accompanying dispatch from the American legation at The Hague, concerning the wish expressed by the Second Hague Conference that appropriate contribution be made by each Government toward the adornment of the peace palace at The Hague.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
December 15, 1908.

---

The PRESIDENT:

The Second Peace Conference at The Hague, at its session of October 16, 1907, adopted the following recommendation by a unanimous vote:

The conference expresses the "vœu" that each of the Governments signatory to The Hague convention contribute to the adornment of the palace of peace by sending, with the approval of the architect, some material of construction or decoration, or some object of art representing the purest specimen of its national production, in order that this palace, the expression of the universal desire and hope, be made of the very substance of every country.

The American minister at The Hague has forwarded to the department a memorandum by the chairman of the board of directors of the Carnegie Foundation suggesting that a marble group by an American sculptor representing in classic style an allegory of "Peace through justice" would be an appropriate contribution for this Government.

I have the honor to submit herewith a copy of the minister's report on the subject, with accompanying papers, and to recommend that the matter be transmitted to the Congress for the consideration of that body.

The Department of State is of the opinion that a sculptural group, such as suggested, by any capable sculptor would cost about \$30,000.

Respectfully submitted.

ELIHU ROOT.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,  
*Washington, December 12, 1908.*

No. 384.]

AMERICAN LEGATION,  
*The Hague, Netherlands, May 12, 1908.*

SIR: I have the honor to present for such action as you may deem appropriate a suggestion that has been made to me by Jonkheer van Karnebeek, chairman of the board of directors of the Carnegie Foundation, and to which I desire to give my own very earnest approbation and support.

In order to make the purpose of Jhr. van Karnebeek's proposition clear I call your attention, first, to the communication of January 17, 1908, made by the committee of directors of the Carnegie Foundation to his excellency the minister for foreign affairs of the Netherlands, a copy of which, with translation, I inclose herewith.

This document cites the "voeu" adopted by the Second Peace Conference at The Hague on October 16, 1907, with reference to the contribution by each of the governments signatory to The Hague convention, with the approval of the architect of the palace of peace, of some material of construction or decoration or some object of art representing the national production, and invited the cooperation of the different governments in realizing this "voeu."

A circular to this effect has been sent to the different governments by the minister for foreign affairs of the Netherlands, and this has been followed in some instances with more direct communications.

It is of course necessary, if good taste and homogeneity of decoration are to be embodied in the edifice now in course of construction, that some central supervision be exercised over the selection of the materials, decoration, and objects of art introduced into the building. With great foresight and under the most enlightened guidance, the committee of the Carnegie Foundation charged with the work of construction is endeavoring to procure from the different Governments disposed to aid in the realization of the "voeu" of the conference those objects which will be at the same time characteristic of the contributing nations and will harmonize, when brought together, in producing an artistic whole.

In pursuance of this idea, it is already well assured that many of the Governments, and it is hoped eventually all of them, will avail themselves of the suggestion and advice of the committee. By this method each country will contribute something characteristic, as, for example, Italy, fine marble columns; France, gobelin tapestries; England and Holland, stained glass, etc.

In considering what might most appropriately come from the United States of America the committee has been influenced primarily by the desire to give special prominence to our country, which has not only taken a leading part in making The Hague a center of international justice for the whole world, but is at the same time the country of which the generous founder of the palace of peace is an honored citizen. In considering what place should be given to the United States the committee has selected the most conspicuous and effective position in the entire building for the location of our contribution—namely, the first landing of the grand staircase, opposite the front entrance—which demands some very handsome object for the completion of the general effect, of which it would be the center and the chef-d'œuvre. The position and its relation to the interior of the building is precisely shown in the accompanying blueprint, which displays the entrance hall and is drawn to scale in meters.

The next salient fact in the mind of the committee is the great merit of our American sculptors, whose work is deemed exceptionally meritorious. In a memorandum which I inclose herewith, prepared by Jhr. van Karnebeek, it is therefore suggested that a marble group, representing in classic style an allegory of "Peace through justice," specially designed for the place indicated, would be an appropriate contribution for our Government.

The idea seems to me an unusually happy one, and certainly no greater compliment could be paid our country than is implied in proposing this most central, most conspicuous, and most honorable emplacement for the American contribution.

If the suggestion should be received with favor by the Department of State there would be ample time for securing the necessary appropriation for the preliminary competition, and for the execution of the work before the palace of peace is completed. Still, in view of the elaborate character of the undertaking, it would be desirable that it receive attention by the next Congress, and especially in view of the fact that until our Government shall have made its decision the committee can take no step in making any other provision for the most important object in the interior decoration.

For these reasons I present the matter at this time in the hope that it may receive the well-considered attention which the proposal deserves; and with the highest appreciation of the opportunity offered for a really noble part in carrying to perfection the purpose of our eminent fellow-countryman, and in realizing the "voeu" with which the nations, by their unanimous vote, have expressed their disposition to crown the enterprise with their generous cooperation.

I have the honor to be, sir,  
Your obedient servant,

DAVID J. HILL.

Hon. ELIHU ROOT,  
*Secretary of State, Washington D. C.*

No. 401.]

THE HAGUE, *January 17, 1908.*

Mr. MINISTER:

The Second Peace Conference, at the proposition of M. le Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, delegate of the French Republic, has unanimously adopted at its ninth plenary session on the 16th of October, 1907, the following "voeu:"

The conference expresses the "voeu" that each of the Governments signatory to The Hague convention, contribute to the adornment of the palace of peace by sending, with the approval of the architect, some material of construction or decoration or some object of art representing the purest specimen of its national production, in order that this palace, the expression of the universal desire and hope, be made of the very substance of every country.

The president of the conference has officially notified us hereof.

Hence, we have the honor to have recourse to your excellency's kind intervention, to the end that through the representatives of the Netherlands Government in foreign countries the attention of the Governments which participated in the conference may be called to this "voeu," which is of great importance in the work of construction of the palace of peace and holds out to us valuable prospects for the accomplishment of the task intrusted to us.

Presuming that the appeal of the conference to the generosity of the governments has not been made in vain, we venture to make some indications as to the method to be followed in order to give to the various contributions their full value and usefulness from an architectural point of view.

We would therefore propose to the governments desirous of participating in the realization of the "voeu" of the conference, which we greet with profound admiration, to advise in what kind of contribution they desire to carry out their intention.

Should these be some material of construction (marble, tiling, wood, wainscoting, metal work, i. e., balustrading), or of decoration (paintings, frescoes, gobelins, hangings, mosaics, moldings, bronzes, lusters, windows), that they would send us or that they would wish to have made on the spot, it seems to us that some agreement with us and our architects as to the quantity, the form and dimensions, perhaps also as to the color and to the subjects would be desirable and under certain circumstances indispensable. Furthermore, it is highly important that the palace should preserve, as much as possible, the character of monumental unity of style, both constructive and decorative, that the edifice should have in its entirety and in every one of the parts thereof.

Should these be separate objects of art (statues, busts, vases, fountains, etc.), preliminary agreement may also be necessary, and will in any case be desirable in order that we may know what we may count upon.

Hence we take the liberty of indicating how much it is to be hoped that the governments will kindly take into consideration and put into execution, as quickly as possible, the generous resolutions that the "voeu" of the conference might inspire in them. The plans which have to serve as models in the construction of the palace are almost ready.

It is desirable to avoid, as far as possible, delay in the work of construction of the edifice.

Accept, Mr. Minister, the assurance of our highest consideration.

THE COMMITTEE OF THE DIRECTORS  
OF THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION,

\_\_\_\_\_  
*President.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Member Secretary.*

○