

SPECIAL MESSAGE ON BATTLESHIPS

President Urges Congress to
Make Provision for Construc-
tion of Four of Largest.

GREAT NAVY IS NECESSARY.

Time Has Not Arrived When Proud
Nation Can Rely for Peace on Fore-
bearance of Other Powers.

Washington, April 14.—Compressed
into what would be not more than a
30-minute speech on the floor of Con-
gress, President Roosevelt today urged
that body, in a special message, to pro-
vide for the construction of four bat-
tleships of the largest and most ap-
proved type at once.

The arguments of the president to
impress his insistence on this naval
program were few, but calculated to
be effective. China was held up as an
example of the "peace at any price"
doctrine, and Great Britain as having
the naval policy to be emulated.

The result of the last conference at
the Hague made it plain that the na-
tions would not for some time, if ever,
agree on a plan of limitation of naval
armament. Arbitration, the president
declared, cannot be relied upon as an ef-
fective remedy, though it should be
utilized to its fullest extent.

Disclaiming any intention on the
part of the United States ever to en-
gage in a war of conquest, the presi-
dent made it plain that this country
could ill afford to relapse into a place
where insult would have to be borne in
silence.

The text of the message follows:

"To the Senate and House of Representa-
tives:

"Let me again urge upon Congress
the need of providing for four battleships
of the best and most advanced
type at this session. Prior to the re-
cent Hague conference it had been my
hope that an agreement could be
reached between the different nations
to limit the increase of naval arma-
ments, and especially to limit the size
of warships. Under these circumstan-
ces I felt that the construction of one
battleship a year would keep our navy
up to its then positive and relative
strength. But actual experience
showed not merely that it was impos-
sible to obtain such an agreement for
the limitation of armament among the
various leading powers, but that there
was no likelihood whatever of obtain-
ing it in the future within any reason-
able time. Coincidentally with this dis-
covery occurred a radical change in the
building of battleships among the great
military nations—a change in which it
was apparent modern battleships have
been or are being constructed of a
size and armament which doubles or
more probably triples their effective-
ness.

MEASURE NECESSARY TO PEACE.

"Every other great naval nation has
or is building a number of ships of this
kind; we have provided for but two,
and, therefore, the balance of power is
not inclining against us. Under these
conditions to provide for but one or
two battleships a year is to provide
that this nation, instead of advancing,
shall go backward in naval rank and
relative power among the great nations.
Such a course would be unwise for us,
if we front on two oceans. As chief ex-
ecutive of the nation and as commander
in-chief of the navy, the responsibility
is imposed upon me, the solemn re-
sponsibility of advising the Congress
of the measures vitally necessary to
secure the peace and welfare of the re-
public in the event of international
complications which are even remotely
possible.

"Having in view this solemn respon-

sibility, I earnestly advise that the
Congress now provide four battleships
of the most advanced type. I cannot
too emphatically say that this is a
measure of peace and not of war. I
can conceive of no circumstance under
which this republic would enter into an
aggressive war; most certainly under
no circumstance would it enter into
an aggressive war to extend its terri-
tory or in any other manner seek
material aggrandizement. I advocate
that the United States build a navy
commensurate with its powers and its
needs, because I feel that such a navy
will be sure guaranty and safeguard
of peace.

ARBITRATION NOT ONLY HOPE.

"We are not a military nation. Our
army is so small as to present an al-
most absurd contrast to our size. It is
properly treated as little more than a
nucleus for organization in case of ser-
vicious war. Yet we are a rich nation
and undevoted wealth invites aggres-
sion. The liberty of individual
speech and action which we prize and
guard, renders it possible that at times
unexpected causes of friction with for-
eign powers may suddenly develop. At
this moment we are negotiating arbi-
tration treaties with all the other pow-
ers that are willing to enter into them.
These arbitration treaties have a spe-
cial usefulness, because in the event
of some sudden disagreement they ren-
der it morally incumbent upon both
nations to seek first to reach an agree-
ment through arbitration, and at least

secure a breathing space during which
the cool judgment of the two nations
may get the anger and the momentary
burst of anger. These arbitration
treaties are not only for the hope of
ending wrong-doing by others
against us, but also as a proof
that we have no intention of doing
wrong ourselves.

CAN'T RELY ON FOREBEARANCE.

"Yet it is idle to assume and from
the standpoint of nations, that nations
honor it is mischievous folly for
any statesman to assume that this
world has yet reached the stage, or
has come within measurable distance
of the stage, where proud nations
jealous of its honor and conscious of
its great mission in the world, can be
content to rely for peace upon the
forebearance of other powers. It
would be equally foolish to rely upon
each of them possessing at all times
and under all circumstances and pro-
vocations an altruistic regard for the
rights of others. The world has not
yet reached the stage, indeed, to all
that has gone on before their eyes in
what has happened in China, in Tur-
key, in the Philippines, in the Balkans,
Central and South America during the
last dozen years. For centuries China
has cultivated the very spirit which
our own peace-at-any-price men wish
this country to copy. For centuries
China has refused to provide military
forces and has treated the career of
the soldier as inferior in honor and
regard to the career of the merchant
or of the man of letters. The result
has been so large an empire which
for so long a time has resolutely pro-
ceeded on the theory of doing away
with what is called 'militarism.' The
result has been a result has been hap-
py in internal affairs, I need not dis-
cuss. All the advanced reformers and
far-sighted patriots in the Chinese em-
pire are at present seeking (I may
add with our heads bowed) to bring
about a radical and far-reaching reform
in internal affairs. In external affairs
the policy has resulted in various
ways. The United States has held large
portions of Chinese territory. There
is a very acute fear in China lest the
empire, because of its defenselessness,
be exposed to absolute dismemberment
and the well-wishers are able to help
it only in small measure because
no nation can help unless that other
can help itself.

APPEALS FOR INTERFERENCE.

"The state department is continually
appealed to to interfere on behalf of
people and nationalities who insist
that they are suffering from oppres-
sion—how Jews in one country, now
Christians in another, now black men
in Africa, Armenians, Koreans, Finns,
Poles, representatives of all, appeal at
times to this government. All of this
appeal is alleged to exist in time
of peace and frequently, although by
no means always, it is alleged to oc-
cur at the hands of people who are
not very formidable in a military
sense. In some cases the accusations
of oppression and wrongdoing are
doubtless ill-founded. In other cases
they are well-founded and in certain
cases the most appalling loss of life is
shown to have occurred, accompanied
with frightful cruelty. It is not our
province to decide which side has been
right and which has been wrong in
all or in any of these controversies.
I am now referring to the loss of life.
It is probably a conservative state-
ment to say that within the last 12
years, at periods of profound peace
and not as a result of war, massacres
and butcheries have occurred in
which more lives of men, women and
children have been lost than in any
single great war since the close of the
Napoleonic struggles.

"To any public man, who knows the
complaints continually made to the
state department, there is an element
of grim tragedy in the claim that the
time has come when weak nations
can be oppressed by those who are
stronger without arousing effective
protest from other strong interests.
Even this, still fresh in the mind of
every thinking man, shows that nei-
ther arbitration nor any other device
can as yet be invoked to prevent the
gravest and most terrible wrongdo-
ing to peoples who are either few in
number or who, if numerous, have
lost the first and most important of
national virtues—the capacity for
self-defense.

MUST DEPEND ON NAVY.

"When the nation is so happily situ-
ated as ours—that is, when it has
no reason to fear or to be feared by
its neighbors—the fleet is all the
more necessary for the preservation
of peace. Great Britain has been
saved by its fleet from the necessity
of facing one of the two alternatives
—of submission to conquest by a for-
eign power, or of itself becoming a
great military power. The United
States can hope for a permanent ca-
reer of peace on only one condition,
and that is, on condition of building
and maintaining a first-class navy; and
the step to be taken toward this end
at this time is to provide for the build-
ing of four additional battleships. I
earnestly wish that Congress would
pass the measures for which I have
asked for strengthening and rendering
more efficient the army as well as
the navy; all of these measures as af-
fecting every branch and detail of both
services are sorely needed, and it would
be the part of far-sighted wisdom to
enact them all into laws, but the most
vital and immediate need is that of
the four battleships.

SPIRIT OF WASHINGTON.

"To carry out this policy is but to
act in the spirit of George Washing-
ton; is but to continue the policies
which he outlined when he said, 'Ob-
serve good faith and justice toward
all nations. Cultivate peace and har-
mony with all.'"

"Nothing is more essential than that
permanent, inveterate antipathies
against particular nations and pas-
sionate attachments for others should
be excluded, and that in place of them
just and amicable feelings toward all
should be cultivated. I cannot repeat
to your notice measures for the
fulfillment of our duties to the rest
of the world without again pressing
upon you the necessity of placing our-
selves in a condition of complete de-
fense and of exacting from them ful-
fillment of their duties toward us.

"The United States ought not to in-
dulge a persuasion that, contrary to
the order of human events, time will
forever keep at a distance those pain-
ful appeals to arms with which the
history of every other nation abounds.
There is rank due to the United States
among nations which will be with-
held if not absolutely lost by the re-
putation of weakness. If we desire to
avoid insult, we must be able to re-
pel it; if we desire to secure peace,
we must be the most powerful instrument
of our rising prosperity, it must be
known that we are at all times ready
for war.

"THEODORE ROOSEVELT.
"The White House, April 14, 1908."

FISHERY PROTECTION CRUISER.

Victoria, B. C., April 15.—The marine
and fisheries department is inviting
tenders for the construction of the fish-
ery protection cruiser for which \$300,-
000 is appropriated. Specifications call
for the delivery of the completed ves-
sel in Victoria.

Tenders will be received until May.
The vessel will be a twin screw steel
steamship, 250 feet long, and 17 feet
deep, with two 100-horsepower engines to
produce a speed of 18 knots an hour.

Everybody's friend—Dr. Thomas'
Electric Oil. Cures toothache, ear-
ache, sore throat. Heals cuts, bruises,
scalds. Stops all pain.

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