**Simplified And Summarized**

**Gathered by: [F.Rosseti](http://www.thefreeresource.com/author/f-rosseti)**

**What Was Wilson’s 14 Points Speech**

In this [January](http://www.thefreeresource.com/january-fun-facts-trivia-and-resources-about-historical-events) 8, 1918, address to Congress, President [Woodrow Wilson](http://www.thefreeresource.com/woodrow-wilson-facts-biography-quotes-and-resources-about-his-life) proposed a 14-point program for world peace. These points were later taken as the basis for peace negotiations at the end [World War I](http://www.thefreeresource.com/timeline-of-the-historical-events-of-ww1). He believed the enactment of these would form the basis for a just, lasting peace. The address was intended to assure the country that the Great [War](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-all-wars-the-united-states-has-been-involved-in) was being fought for a moral cause and for postwar peace in [Europe](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-europe-for-kids).

In the speech, Wilson directly addressed what he perceived as the causes for the world [war](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-all-wars-the-united-states-has-been-involved-in) by calling for the abolition of secret treaties, a reduction in armaments, an adjustment in colonial claims in the interests of both native peoples and colonists, and freedom of the [seas](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-seas-and-facts-for-kids). Wilson also made proposals that would ensure world peace in the future.

People in [Europe](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-europe-for-kids) generally welcomed Wilson’s intervention, but his Allied colleagues were skeptical of the applicability of Wilsonian idealism.

**Woodrow Wilson’s 14 Points Speech On January 8, 1918**

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

**Summary of what this means**: No more secret agreements (“Open covenants openly arrived at”).

2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the [seas](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-seas-and-facts-for-kids), outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in [war](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-all-wars-the-united-states-has-been-involved-in), except as the [seas](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-seas-and-facts-for-kids) may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

**Summary of what this means**: Free navigation of all [seas](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-seas-and-facts-for-kids).

3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

**Summary of what this means**: An end to all economic barriers between countries.

4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

**Summary of what this means**: Countries to reduce weapon numbers.

5. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the [government](http://www.thefreeresource.com/resource/education/resources) whose title is to be determined.

**Summary of what this means**: All decisions regarding the colonies should be impartial

6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting [Russia](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-russia-for-kids) as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded [Russia](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-russia-for-kids) by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

**Summary of what this means**: The German Army is to be removed from [Russia](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-russia-for-kids). [Russia](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-russia-for-kids) should be left to develop her own political set-up.

7. [Belgium](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-belgium-for-kids), the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the [government](http://www.thefreeresource.com/resource/education/resources) of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.

**Summary of what this means**: [Belgium](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-belgium-for-kids) should be independent like before the [war](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-all-wars-the-united-states-has-been-involved-in).

8. All [French](http://www.thefreeresource.com/france-10-interesting-facts-you-never-knew) territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to [France](http://www.thefreeresource.com/france-10-interesting-facts-you-never-knew) by [Prussia](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-prussia-for-kids) in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.

**Summary of what this means**: [France](http://www.thefreeresource.com/france-10-interesting-facts-you-never-knew) should be fully liberated and allowed to recover Alsace-Lorraine

9. A readjustment of the frontiers of [Italy](http://www.thefreeresource.com/top-10-fun-and-weird-facts-about-italy) should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

**Summary of what this means**: All Italians are to be allowed to live in [Italy](http://www.thefreeresource.com/top-10-fun-and-weird-facts-about-italy). [Italy](http://www.thefreeresource.com/top-10-fun-and-weird-facts-about-italy)’s borders are to “along clearly recognisable lines of nationality.”

10. The peoples of [Austria](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-austria-for-kids)-[Hungary](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-hungary-for-kids), whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development.

**Summary of what this means**: Self-determination should be allowed for all those living in[Austria](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-austria-for-kids)-[Hungary](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-hungary-for-kids).

11. [Romania](http://www.thefreeresource.com/fun-facts-about-romania-for-kids), [Serbia](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-serbia-for-kids), and [Montenegro](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-montenegro-for-kids) should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; [Serbia](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-serbia-for-kids) accorded free and secure access to the [sea](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-seas-and-facts-for-kids); and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

**Summary of what this means**: Self-determination and guarantees of independence should be allowed for the Balkan states.

12. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

**Summary of what this means**: The Turkish people should be governed by the Turkish [government](http://www.thefreeresource.com/resource/education/resources). Non-Turks in the old Turkish Empire should govern themselves.

13. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the [sea](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-seas-and-facts-for-kids), and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

**Summary of what this means**: An independent [Poland](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-poland-for-kids) should be created which should have access to the [sea](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-seas-and-facts-for-kids).

14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

**Summary of what this means**: A League of Nations should be set up to guarantee the political and territorial independence of all states.

**Summary Of President Woodrow Wilson’s Address To Congress, 11 February 1918**

**Wilson’s speech on**[**February**](http://www.thefreeresource.com/february-fun-facts-trivia-and-resources-about-historical-events)**11th addressed international reaction to his initial Fourteen Points speech to Congress on 8**[**January**](http://www.thefreeresource.com/january-fun-facts-trivia-and-resources-about-historical-events)**1918.**

After all, the test of whether it is possible for either [Government](http://www.thefreeresource.com/resource/education/resources) to go any further in this comparison of views is simple and obvious. The principles to be applied are these:

First, that each part of the final settlement must be based upon the essential justice of that particular case and upon such adjustments as are most likely to bring a peace that will be permanent;

Second, that peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game, now forever discredited, of the balance of power; but that

Third, every territorial settlement involved in this [war](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-all-wars-the-united-states-has-been-involved-in) must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned; and

Fourth, that all well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of [Europe](http://www.thefreeresource.com/facts-about-europe-for-kids).

A general peace erected upon such foundations can be discussed. Until such a peace can be secured we have no choice but to go on. So far as we can judge, these principles that we regard as fundamental are already everywhere accepted as imperative, except among the spokesmen of the military and annexationist party in [Germany](http://www.thefreeresource.com/10-fun-and-interesting-facts-about-germany).

Source: Source Records of the Great [War](http://www.thefreeresource.com/list-of-all-wars-the-united-states-has-been-involved-in), Vol. VI, ed. Charles F. Horne, National Alumni 1923