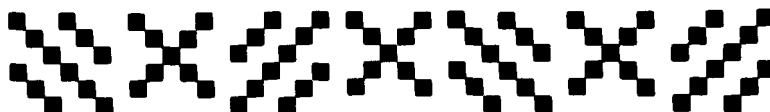


American Nationalism vs.
The League of Nations:
The Correspondence of Albert J. Beveridge
and Louis A. Coolidge, 1918-1920

*Sheldon M. Stern**



During the past two decades historians have added new dimensions to their evaluations of progressivism. No longer viewed simply as the defensive response of middle class reformers to the increasing power of the business community, progressivism emerges instead as a collection of ambiguous and conflicting reform movements often initiated and controlled by the very forces ostensibly targeted for reform, as a reassertion of moral traditions and democratic values which frequently embraced racial prejudice and imperialism, and an effort to protect individual initiative from corporate encroachment which often fostered business consolidation and the expansion of government bureaucracy.¹

The career of Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana is symptomatic of the twisting and contradictory currents characteristic of the progressive era. Beginning his national senatorial career in 1899 as a militant expansionist and nationalist, Beveridge rose to prominence between the Spanish-American War and the end of the Philippine insurrection in 1902 as an advocate of America's budding empire. An orator of extraordinary skill, he advocated both moral mission and economic

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¹ For recent bibliographical surveys on progressivism see Arthur S. Link and William M. Leary, Jr., *The Progressive Era and the Great War* (New York, 1969), 1-67; David M. Kennedy, *Progressivism: The Critical Issues* (Boston, 1971), 183-91.

opportunity as the complementary goals of America's new international thrust.²

By the early years of Theodore Roosevelt's administration, however, Beveridge began to augment his expansive nationalism with the politically promising role of Senate insurgent. His reform activities between 1903 and 1912, aimed at promoting social equilibrium by easing abuses which threatened to incite social unrest, read like a litany of progressive causes. Beveridge actively supported a department of commerce and a bureau of corporations, a lower tariff and a neutral tariff commission, federal railroad regulation, a national meat inspection bill, income and inheritance taxes, a federal child labor bill, and direct primaries.³

Breaking with President William Howard Taft over the Payne-Aldrich tariff of 1909, Beveridge lost his Senate seat in 1910 and turned with increasing eagerness to support Theodore Roosevelt's return to presidential politics. Despite his reluctance to leave the Republican party, Beveridge joined Roosevelt in the Progressive party crusade of 1912. The former senator's keynote address at the party's national convention, in which he attacked covert corporate corruption and outmoded notions of individualism, represented the high point in the moral-religious rhetoric generated by the Progressive party. It is this aspect of Beveridge's career, from insurgent to Progressive, that has captured most historical attention. Defeated as Progressive candidate for governor of Indiana in 1912, Beveridge largely withdrew from politics to devote himself to the multivolume biography of John Marshall which ultimately earned him the Pulitzer Prize.⁴

During the years which followed the demise of the Progressive party Beveridge altered his views on domestic politics. Concerned by 1917 over the proliferation of centralized federal authority and bureaucracy which he felt had overstepped the limited goal of safeguarding basic social justice, Beveridge reversed field on virtually all his reform and Pro-

² Albert J. Beveridge, *Americans of To-Day and To-Morrow* (Philadelphia, 1908); Claude Bowers, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era* (Cambridge, 1932), 97-145; John Braeman, *Albert J. Beveridge: American Nationalist* (Chicago, 1971), 42-67.

³ Albert J. Beveridge, *The Meaning of the Times and Other Speeches* (Indianapolis, 1908); Bowers, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era*, 208-309; Braeman, *Albert J. Beveridge*, 98-150.

⁴ Bowers, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era*, 333-454; Braeman, *Albert J. Beveridge*, 151-239.

gressive positions. He moved, as George Mowry put it, "from an ardent Progressive to a militant reactionary." Beveridge attacked all government controls over corporations, defended the open shop and the suppression of strikers, denounced income and inheritance taxes, and even endorsed the high tariff. His popularity as a Chamber of Commerce speaker rose perceptibly.⁵

Beveridge remained, however, a consistent expansionist and nationalist, emerging early in the First World War as an opponent of the internationalist minded League to Enforce Peace. Bitterly denouncing attempts to involve the United States in any international organization, Beveridge became by 1918 a leading speaker in the organized efforts to revise drastically or defeat totally Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations proposal. Beveridge's position, the logical extension of his militant interventionism of 1899, demanded that the United States avoid any constriction of its freedom of action in world politics. Always an expansionist, never an isolationist, Beveridge feared that the League of Nations would entangle the United States in European politics and restrict the pursuit of American political and economic self interest, particularly in Latin America and Asia.⁶

This least known phase of Beveridge's career is clearly documented in his correspondence with Louis Arthur Coolidge of Massachusetts. The two men had met during Beveridge's first years in the Senate and had corresponded as early as 1899; but it was after 1916, following Beveridge's purchase of a home in Beverly Farms, Massachusetts, and after their views on American national interests dovetailed, that their correspondence increased dramatically.⁷ Coolidge, although never comfortable with political insurgency and reform, had come to his post-1916 nationalist and expansionist position by a path similar to that of Beveridge. Private secretary to Congressman Henry Cabot Lodge from 1888 to 1891, and later a prominent Washington and New York political correspondent, Coolidge had worked closely with Lodge in 1898

⁵ Albert J. Beveridge, *The State of the Nation* (Indianapolis, 1924), 92-199; George E. Mowry, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement* (New York, 1960), 379; Braeman, *Albert J. Beveridge*, 254-88.

⁶ Beveridge, *State of the Nation*, 1-43; Bowers, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era*, 496-513.

⁷ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, January 18, November 20, 1900, Louis A. Coolidge Papers (in the possession of John W. Coolidge, Jr., Marblehead, Massachusetts).

to advance the cause of American empire.⁸ In 1904 Roosevelt named him director of the Republican literary bureau for the presidential campaign. Coolidge's successful efforts in coordinating press and publicity matters and his ability to work with both reform and conservative elements to create party unity eventually earned him an appointment as assistant secretary of the treasury. Coolidge left Washington in 1909, after more than twenty years of intimate contact with the centers of power in the Republican party, to return to his native Massachusetts to become treasurer and director of the United Shoe Machinery Company. In that capacity he developed a far reaching plan for enhancing employee welfare while in turn obviating the need for unionization and corrective legislation. In 1914 his reputation in employer-employee relations earned him the chairmanship of the Welfare Work Department of the conservative, business oriented National Civic Federation. As early as 1911, when the United Shoe Machinery Company was prosecuted under the Sherman Antitrust Act, Coolidge began to write with increasing anxiety about the expanding scope of federal power over business. During World War I Coolidge served on the three member Federal Shipbuilding Wage Adjustment Board, only to resign in 1918 after denouncing federal intervention in employer-employee relations.⁹

By 1917 Beveridge and Coolidge agreed on the question of limiting federal power over business freedom. But it was on the issue of unfettered American initiative in international affairs, as challenged first by the efforts of the League to Enforce Peace and finally by Woodrow Wilson's League Covenant, that the two men discovered ideological accord and began practical cooperation. Their correspondence provides new insights into this phase of Beveridge's career and is particularly significant since it has been largely overlooked

⁸ Louis A. Coolidge to Henry Cabot Lodge, July 27, July 31, August 6, August 9, September 27, October 14, 1898, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers (Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston). Henry Cabot Lodge to Louis A. Coolidge, August 1, August 4, August 11, August 26, 1898, Coolidge Papers.

⁹ Sherwin L. Cook, *Louis A. Coolidge: The Man and the Citizen* (Boston, 1924), 10-23; Louis A. Coolidge to William Howard Taft, August 7, 1918, Coolidge Papers. For elaboration on Coolidge's entire career, see Sheldon M. Stern, "The Evolution of a Reactionary: Louis A. Coolidge, 1900-1925," *Mid-America*, LVII (April, 1975), 89-105.

by Beveridge's two principal biographers.¹⁰ In addition, Coolidge's papers contain a significant Beveridge letter which further clarifies the former senator's nascent anti-League position.¹¹

It should be stressed that Beveridge and Coolidge had deep mutual confidence and affection. Their letters are candid, personal, and often witty. In one note, for example, Beveridge twitted Coolidge on his business associations by labeling him, in Rooseveltian rhetoric, "a great malefactor of wealth."¹² Beveridge often confided personal views to Coolidge, turned to him for advice on various topics, and sought help in revising speeches and articles. In addition to their increasingly similar political views, the two men shared a common experience as biographers. Coolidge had published a lengthy biography of Senator Orville H. Platt in 1910 and one of Ulysses S. Grant in 1917, while Beveridge finished his first two volumes of the life of John Marshall in 1916 and 1919. Beveridge admired Coolidge's work, openly expressing the hope that the Grant volume would inspire him to complete the final two Marshall volumes.¹³

By early 1918, however, the Beveridge-Coolidge correspondence came to be dominated by a single issue: President Wilson's plan for American participation in an international league to assure peace. Wilson's increasing preoccupation with a league as the war progressed and his ties to the League to Enforce Peace, in which Republicans such as Taft and Elihu Root played leading roles, convinced both Beveridge and Coolidge that the battle had to be waged *before* the president's final plan could be presented to the United States Senate. Although they had personal ties to Lodge, who then chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and had shared the Massachusetts senator's expansionist ideas

¹⁰ Bowers, in *Beveridge and the Progressive Era*, 536, cites a single Beveridge letter to Coolidge; otherwise, neither Bowers nor Braeman in his *Albert J. Beveridge*, mentions this relationship.

¹¹ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, January 31, 1918, Coolidge Papers. See pages 144-47 below for the photographic reproduction of this newly discovered letter. The underlinings in the letter are not Beveridge's but were added by a later reader.

¹² Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, April 3, 1916, Albert J. Beveridge Papers, Box 205 (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.).

¹³ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, February 9, 1917; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, February 13, 1917, Beveridge Papers, Box 208.

for some twenty years, Beveridge and Coolidge distrusted Lodge's receptivity to the general principle of a league of nations. They therefore cooperated with the more isolationist oriented William E. Borah and Hiram W. Johnson, who also totally opposed American participation in a league. In spite of Beveridge's preoccupation with his biographical work, Coolidge drew him into anti-League activity with increasing success. By 1919 Coolidge had become a national organizer and president of the Massachusetts branch of the League for the Preservation of American Independence, an effort to counter the work of the League to Enforce Peace.¹⁴

Beveridge and Coolidge were convinced that only an early organized appeal to the American people could frustrate the plans of the president, whom Coolidge contemptuously labeled "the Lord's Anointed."¹⁵ In January, 1918, Coolidge sent an urgent telegram to Beveridge informing him that Boston area colleges had agreed to cancel their individual alumni dinners in favor of "a great patriotic demonstration" at the Boston Opera House. Coolidge urged the former senator to make the keynote address, "which will be a rousing call to the patriotism of the college men of the country."¹⁶ In a letter to Coolidge, Beveridge responded with a concise statement of opposition to any league scheme. Expressing his anxiety about constant speaking pressures which might distract him from his writing and adding his impression that Boston might be sympathetic to the position of the League to Enforce Peace, he launched a nationalistic attack on the League proponents. Linking the League to Enforce Peace to "non-American war objects and . . . camouflage," Beveridge asserted:

I am a Nationalist & I look upon the situation from that point of view. My speech would be on the American Nation; the vital need of welding our people into some kind of homogeneity; our peculiar place in the world & the power & influence of it which should be nourished & strengthened rather than weakened or abandoned; the constructive steps we must take to win the war & also to prepare for the grave conditions

¹⁴ Henry Cabot Lodge to Albert J. Beveridge, December 3, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 211; Louis A. Coolidge to Hiram W. Johnson, August 7, 15, 1919, Coolidge Papers; Stern, "Evolution of a Reactionary," 95-96.

¹⁵ Louis A. Coolidge to Henry Cabot Lodge, August 2, 1919, Lodge Papers.

¹⁶ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, telegram, January 30, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 208.

4164 Washington Boulevard
Indianapolis

Confidential

Jan 31
1918

Dear Louis:

I want very much to come
but here is situation:

1. Similar requests from all
over country are so urgent, that
if I accept one, I fear I must
accept others. If so, I should
be speaking all the time & would
have to stop work on book
entirely. This I would do if
there were an emergency & others
could not do the work better
than I. But this is not the
case.

2. As you know, I think
poorly of the "League to Enforce
Peace" & of non-American war
objections & of various samples
of camouflage. I think you & I
agree on these points. But
are not these the very things
now most popular in Boston?
If so would my speech be
expressive of the views of
the audience?

I am a Nationalist &
look upon the situation
from that point of view.
My speech would be on
the American Nation; the
vital need of welding our

us

4164 Washington Boulevard
Indianapolis

people into some kind of
homogeneity; our peculiar
place in the world & the
power & influence of it
which should be nourished
& strengthened rather than
weakened or abandoned;
the constructive steps we
must take to win the war
& also to prepare for
the grave conditions that
are sure to come after
peace is secured. etc, etc, etc.
But would this be acceptable?

The emotional, "inspirational"
stuff does not appeal to me
- I am not built on the Billy
Sunday evangelistic lines.
Moreover it seems to me that
the blood-horror-hate string
has been played upon until
it has lost its resonance; also
"the parliament-of-man, federation
of the-world" - demagoguery - of
mankind, etc etc spinets have
been strummed upon until it
gives out a somewhat monotonous
tone. Neither am I thrilled by
Mr. Wilson's idea of bankrupting
the country & killing hundreds of
thousands of our best young
men in order to remake the
map of the Balkans & settle
the question of digging irrigating
ditch here in the middle of Indiana.

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4164 Washington Boulevard
Indianapolis

Nine hundred & ninety nine
parts out of a thousand of my
thought & interest is of
in The American Nation - its
upbuilding, protection &
welfare.

But would a speech
along these American
lines be well received in
Boston? Are the people
there ready for constructive
talk? Do they care to con-
sider the future? The
time will come - & soon -
when all this will be
demanded; but has that
hour arrived?

I have written you thus fully
in order that you may know
the reasons for my hesitation
& so that you can decide
intelligently - for I will do
as you say after you
have thought over the
matter. This letter is, of
course, confidential.

If I come I shall try to
prepare the very best -
speech I am capable
of writing - I think there has

147

404 Washington Boulevard
Indianapolis

been too much hair-trigger
exhortation; & besides, hurry-
-up oratory does not apply
to me.

I cannot tell you how
much I value the fact
that you want me to come.
I have declined, at once,
a good many invitations
but your is another
matter.

So tell me your decision
& I will carry it out.

Am working steadily on
the Manual & have the
first draft of Vol III nearly
finished.

My best regards to Mrs
Coolidge.

Always Faithfully
D. W.

that are sure to come after peace is secured etc, etc, etc. But would this be acceptable?¹⁷

The goal of Beveridge's inward nationalism of 1918 was consistent with that of his outward nationalism of 1898: to prevent the imposition of any limitations on American economic and political penetration abroad. Denouncing "emotional, 'inspirational' stuff," Beveridge insisted: "I am not built on the Billy Sunday evangelistic lines." Expressing equal distaste for the anti-German "blood-horror-hate" line as well as for the monotonous "'parliament-of-man,-federation-of-the-world'" theme, Beveridge reserved his most vitriolic contempt for "Mr. Wilson's idea of bankrupting the country & killing hundreds of thousands of our best young men in order to remake the map of the Balkans & settle the question of digging irrigating ditches in Asia Minor." In a line reminiscent of his 1899 Senate oratory on American international destiny, Beveridge declared: "Nine hundred & ninety nine parts out of a thousand of my thought & interest is of & in the American Nation—its upbuilding, protection & well being."¹⁸

Despite his reluctance to interrupt his writing to make the trip to Boston, Beveridge left the final decision in Coolidge's hands: "I will do as you say, after you have thought over the matter . . . so tell me your decision and I will carry it out."¹⁹ Ultimately, the fact that Coolidge was out of town when Beveridge's letter arrived led to the selection of another speaker. Later that year, however, Beveridge did make a Boston address which Coolidge hoped would be "the big speech of the drive."²⁰

The identity of views between the two men on the issue of the League is evident in Coolidge's enthusiastic response to Beveridge's January 31 letter. Coolidge declared: "I think myself that everyone is becoming nauseated with the talk about a war for Democracy, when everyone knows in his heart that there is no earthly reason for our being in this

¹⁷ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, January 31, 1918, Coolidge Papers.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, telegram, February 9, 1918; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, March 8, 1918; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, telegram, September 21, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 208.

fight except to save our own bacon. Personally I don't quite know what kind of Democracy anyone can be fighting for and I don't believe any of those who are throwing out language about it have any clearer conception of it than I have."²¹ Beveridge agreed completely: "Good Lord what a nice letter! You certainly say things when you get in the humor. Also, your remarks give me some faint hope that, after all, there may be some remnants of statesmanship left in the country."²²

Over the next months Beveridge consistently picked up this nationalist theme, stressing it in a tough attack on the League to Enforce Peace in a Memorial Day address. Coolidge applauded the speech, a copy of which Beveridge had sent him. "I have been waiting," he wrote, "for someone with a voice that carries to puncture that balloon which is inflated with poison gas. When are we going to get clear of this fog of sanctimony and pretense in Washington; and when can we lift Wilson's dead hand off the spirit of the American people?"²³

By the fall of 1918, with the war clearly nearing an end, Beveridge became convinced that his patriotic duty required him to expose the impending threat to American security posed by Wilson's League plan. In a volley of letters to Roosevelt, publisher George Harvey, Lodge, and others, Beveridge argued that as a matter of practical politics the nationalist versus internationalist debate had handed the Republican party a winning issue for 1920.²⁴ As president of the Middlesex Club, Boston's most prestigious Republican organization, Coolidge had in October, 1918, asked Beveridge to spell out his views on the League of Nations for a series of Middlesex Club resolutions to be adopted in late October. Beveridge had responded with gusto, combining a sense for practical Republican politics sure to appeal to the club members with his well developed nationalist fervor. "I have thought about this long and carefully," Beveridge told

²¹ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, March 8, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 208.

²² Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, March 14, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 208.

²³ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, June 11, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 211.

²⁴ Albert J. Beveridge to Theodore Roosevelt, October 19, 1918; Albert J. Beveridge to Henry Cabot Lodge, December 9, 1918; Albert J. Beveridge to George Harvey, December 26, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Boxes 211-213.

Coolidge. "We are now without an issue." But, he insisted, if "we frankly and bravely attack Wilson's League of Nations we have an issue, a real and great *issue*. Wilson has made this League of Nations his own; and he has made it the central idea of the Democratic party. He cannot escape from it if he would."²⁵

Beveridge foresaw in the League issue a series of effective Republican campaign attacks. The League, he charged, would lead to "a community of economic interests" threatening American economic sovereignty; the League "would take out of our hands . . . such purely American questions as the interpretation and application of the Monroe Doctrine; our Mexican policy; the management of our canal; our course with reference to Cuba and the Phillipines [*sic*]." Beveridge further argued that control over immigration laws, "the ultimate test of any Nation's sovereignty," would be at the mercy of the League; even the constitutional power granted to Congress to declare war would have to be repealed, since the majority of the League had to retain the power to commit the entire body "to prevent aggression . . . or 'secure justice' anywhere on earth." What issues, Beveridge exulted, with which to go to the American people!²⁶

Turning to historical examples Beveridge insisted that even in the past a league would have stunted American survival and expansion. He argued that during the Civil War virtually all members of such a league would have supported the South's right to "self-determination" in order to mask the desire to split and weaken the United States. The wars against Mexico and Spain would have been denounced as "war[s] of 'aggression' on our part." Conversely, Beveridge believed that the United States would have been forced into war against England to preserve the Boer Republic, against France to protect Algiers and Morocco, against Japan to defend Korea, against Russia to save Finland. "The above," Beveridge warned Coolidge, "is merely an outline of an analysis of what Mr. Wilson's League of Nations would have done to us and the world in the past and will do to us in the future."²⁷

²⁵ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, October 14, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 211.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

To meet Wilson's challenge Beveridge called for an appeal not to isolationism but rather to the "American National spirit . . . [and] the sentimental influence of tradition." With the above historical arguments augmenting this strategy Beveridge foresaw a steady erosion of League support. But the task would be arduous, demanding skill and courage, and Beveridge summoned Coolidge to take it up: "This letter is for your own personal consideration exclusively. I do not want to butt in to the councils of Massachusetts Republicans." But Beveridge added: the League issue which "appeals to the sentiment as well as the reason of the people," could give the Republicans a new rationale for existence beyond the mere pull of office—namely, the defense of vital American principles. "I think that what our party needs now more than anything else," he wrote, "is a general staff to plan for the immediate and the distant future." Beveridge then advised: "Fortune seems to have given you the opportunity to be the chief of the first section of such a general staff. For the sake of the party, for the sake of the country, I pray that you will avail yourself of it."²⁸

Coolidge responded positively, and the Middlesex Club resolutions, demanding a "lasting peace which leaves America the master of her destiny," reflected the influence of Beveridge's exhortations.²⁹ Within weeks the two men had immersed themselves fully in the anti-League struggle. By late October Beveridge had accepted Coolidge's urging to undertake an anti-League speaking tour through Michigan, Indiana, and New Hampshire. Coolidge coordinated the tour, consulting with Lodge, Johnson, and other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Beveridge revised his speeches in accordance with Coolidge's suggestions and declared his complete confidence in Coolidge's judgment on projected speaking engagements: "You will know what to do. Whatever you do . . . will be O.K. with me."³⁰ By December Coolidge even convinced Beveridge to oppose publicly "as a serious mistake" any efforts to create machinery to enforce the decrees of the Hague Court; such a move could

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ "The Middlesex Resolutions," October 29, 1918, Lodge Papers.

³⁰ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, October 24, 1918; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, October 30, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 211.



ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE

Courtesy Indiana Division, Indiana State
Library, Indianapolis



LOUIS A. COOLIDGE

Courtesy Coolidge family

create internationalist sentiment helpful to the defenders of the League.³¹

Coolidge's regular correspondence with Lodge provided Beveridge with a vehicle for influencing the Massachusetts senator's speeches urging reservations to the League Covenant—which Wilson regarded as an essential part of the peace treaty. When the treaty came before the Senate, Lodge opposed its ratification unless "reservations" or amendments were added to the League Covenant exempting the Monroe Doctrine and other tenets of American foreign policy from any League interference or control. Beveridge hoped that Lodge would find his arguments against the League helpful; but, wary of Lodge's willingness to endorse the abstract concept of a league of nations, suggested as an alternative that "one of our men like Borah or Sherman" could use the material "with effect."³²

During the early months of 1919, when the battle lines on the League hardened at home as the president negotiated in Europe, Beveridge resisted some of Coolidge's speaking proposals in order to concentrate on his writing.³³ By July, however, Beveridge succumbed to pressures for an extensive swing through the Midwest. The events surrounding this tour have been touched on by Beveridge's biographers, but Coolidge's primary role as coordinator has been completely overlooked.³⁴

It was to Coolidge, a fellow biographer, that Beveridge spilled out his anxiety over the pressures to complete the fourth Marshall volume: "I am profoundly troubled. As you know, I am not only anxious but eager to make this speaking trip. If the production of the book involved only myself I would postpone it . . . and go like a shot. But it is a matter of contract involving an investment by the publishers of a

³¹ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, December 3, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 211.

³² Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, December 4, 3, 1918, Beveridge Papers, Box 211; for an analysis of Coolidge's correspondence with Lodge, see Sheldon M. Stern, "Henry Cabot Lodge and Louis A. Coolidge: In Defense of American Sovereignty, 1898-1920," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, forthcoming in 1976.

³³ Louis A. Coolidge to Henry Cabot Lodge, February 14, 1919, Lodge Papers; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, March 24, 1919; Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, March 25, 1919, Beveridge Papers, Box 214.

³⁴ Bowers, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era*, 506-507; Braeman, *Albert J. Beveridge*, 262.

pretty heavy sum of money." Beveridge implored Coolidge to consult anti-League senators and explain this dilemma: "If our men in Washington, after understanding my situation, feel that I should make the trip, I will do so and risk the consequences" As an alternative, Beveridge proposed that the trip be postponed until September, when the fight would be "in full swing."³⁵ Coolidge contacted the anti-League members of Lodge's committee and wired Beveridge: "Foreign Relations Committee unanimous in feeling that unless you go now it is useless to go later."³⁶ Beveridge's response revealed both his annoyance and the depth of his commitment to the anti-League cause: "Telegram received. Think decision ridiculous since finish of fight will come during October, but will go now . . . [and] make four speeches, beginning either July 28 or July 30. Publishers threaten to suspend work on book if more time taken."³⁷

A Chicago rally in the last days of July found Beveridge accidentally in the midst of an escalating race riot. In a hastily scrawled telegram marked "Rush," Beveridge first informed Coolidge of his intention to abandon the tour: "Race riot increasing. Men killed loop district this forenoon. Meeting cancelled because extremely dangerous. Impossible. St. Paul meeting badly arranged . . . cancelled trip for present."³⁸ Beveridge returned to his writing with considerable relief; within days, however, Coolidge began urging him to make some Boston appearances, and the reluctant author agreed. Beveridge continued to speak throughout the following months.³⁹

On November 19, 1919, the Senate Democrats, unable to enact the president's unamended version, bowed to Wilson's demands and defeated the treaty with Lodge's reservations. Beveridge commended the Massachusetts senator's skill and statesmanship.⁴⁰ But, writing to Coolidge on the same day,

³⁵ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, July 16, 1919, Beveridge Papers, Box 214.

³⁶ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, telegram, July 18, 1919, Beveridge Papers, Box 214.

³⁷ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, telegram, [July 19, 1919?], Beveridge Papers, Box 214.

³⁸ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, telegram, July 29, 1919, Beveridge Papers, Box 214.

³⁹ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, July 31, August 8, 1919; telegram, August 13, 1919, Beveridge Papers, Box 214.

⁴⁰ Albert J. Beveridge to Henry Cabot Lodge, November 21, 1919, Lodge Papers; Braeman, *Albert J. Beveridge*, 263.

Beveridge congratulated his Massachusetts friend in personal and almost euphoric terms

on the great victory that has been won for our country. In the whole fight nothing has happened that has given me, personally, such faith that we would win as the noble stand you took, the limitless courage you displayed and the resourcefulness with which you worked. I cannot adequately put in words my admiration for you and my gratitude to you. After all Henry Wise Wood was right when he said that the old American blood would save the nation in this crisis, and no person in the whole land has demonstrated that fact better than you have . . .

Every good wish, dear Louie. From the very first I always have cared for you as you well know; but never have I so esteemed, admired and loved you as I do now. You have proved pure gold without alloy.⁴¹

Despite their mutual sense of satisfaction and triumph, Beveridge and Coolidge were aware that the fight had only progressed through the first round. Beveridge warned Coolidge to keep up his vigilance: "the Leaguers will try to browbeat or honeyfuggle or bully or soft soap or frighten our men into . . . some sort of a 'compromise'. They must not succeed. We must not let them turn our victory into a defeat."⁴² Although obviously touched by Beveridge's praise, Coolidge agreed that the climactic struggle lay ahead. Describing an anti-League rally at Boston's Faneuil Hall the previous week, Coolidge insisted that the Lodge reservations to the treaty, designed to prevent League interference in the formulation of American foreign policy, marked the limits of compromise: "These professional League of Nations Apostles seem to have it in their nut that the trouble is all with the Senate The only thing that blocks the way to the ratification of the Treaty," Coolidge bellowed, ". . . is Wilson himself. It is reduced now to a question of his own pigheadedness and all we have to do is to see that the country is completely convinced of that."⁴³

By January, 1920, with a final vote on the League approaching, Beveridge and Coolidge peppered Lodge and other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with

⁴¹ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, November 21, 1919, Beveridge Papers, Box 219.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, December 8, 1919, Beveridge Papers, Box 214.

advice to crush all efforts toward new concessions.⁴⁴ Lodge's replies, which struck both Beveridge and Coolidge as somewhat evasive, convinced them that a deal might yet be worked out behind the scenes creating some form of American participation in the League.⁴⁵ In late January Coolidge wired Beveridge an urgent request to keep the heat on Lodge and "stop the compromise talk."⁴⁶ Beveridge complied. "As you requested, I wired Lodge as follows: '. . . your reservations utmost that can be conceded. Even your reservations may not prevent President from making disastrous foreign commitments [*sic*].'"⁴⁷ Coolidge approved of Beveridge's actions, describing the telegram to Lodge as "tactful and at the same time explicit and unequivocal." But Coolidge confessed that his fears had not been relieved: "I don't like the tone of the despatches and I don't get very encouraging information on the phone. The spirit of concession seems to be in the air and there is something like precipitancy in trying to get the infernal Treaty ratified."⁴⁸

The final Senate defeat of the peace treaty on March 19, 1920, convinced even these doubters that they had successfully defended "every real American ideal." With a sense of relief Beveridge and Coolidge turned their attention to the upcoming Republican national convention and speculation on its presidential nominee. Yet even the convention created some anxiety for Coolidge, who predicted that the nomination of Herbert Hoover could lead a Republican endorsement of a compromise close to Wilson's position.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Louis A. Coolidge to Henry Cabot Lodge, December 30, 1919; Henry Cabot Lodge to Louis A. Coolidge, January 1, 1920; Henry Cabot Lodge to Albert J. Beveridge, January 3, 1920; Louis A. Coolidge to Henry Cabot Lodge, January 15, 1920; Henry Cabot Lodge to Louis A. Coolidge, January 28, 1920; Louis A. Coolidge to Henry Cabot Lodge, February 9, 1920; Henry Cabot Lodge to Louis A. Coolidge, February 11, 1920, Lodge Papers.

⁴⁵ Henry Cabot Lodge to Albert J. Beveridge, January 3, 1920; Henry Cabot Lodge to Louis A. Coolidge, January 28, 1920, Lodge Papers.

⁴⁶ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, telegram, January 28, 1920, Beveridge Papers, Box 219.

⁴⁷ Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, February 6, 1920, Beveridge Papers, Box 219.

⁴⁸ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, February 11, 1920, Beveridge Papers, Box 219.

⁴⁹ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, February 11, 1920; Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, April 27, 1920; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, May 3, 1920; Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, May 5, 1920, Beveridge Papers, Box 219; Louis A. Coolidge to Henry Cabot Lodge, April 20, 1920, Lodge Papers.

The Beveridge-Coolidge correspondence is significant from a number of perspectives. It opens to historians a relationship previously neglected in assessing Beveridge's life. In detailing Beveridge's practical and ideological commitment to the struggle against the League of Nations, the correspondence clarifies both the post-Progressive party phase of Beveridge's career and reveals the consistency of his nationalist and expansionist views. The letters help create a more balanced view of Beveridge's career, bringing into sharper focus the significant chapter in his political life which followed his defeat in 1910 and the brief Progressive party episode between 1912 and 1914.

In the final years of their correspondence, until Coolidge's death in 1925, the two men sharpened their shared hostility to such issues as the expansion of federal authority, the regulation of private enterprise, corporate taxation, and the union shop. By the mid-1920s the Albert J. Beveridge of 1912 was no more than a dim memory.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, June 7, 1922; Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, June 9, 1922; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, December 14, 1922; Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, December 16, 1922; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, January 4, 1923; Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, May 31, 1923; Louis A. Coolidge to Albert J. Beveridge, January 23, 1924; Albert J. Beveridge to Louis A. Coolidge, January 25, 1924, Beveridge Papers, Boxes 232, 242, 248.