

TO AUTHORIZE THE ERECTION OF A STATUE OF HENRY CLAY

FEBRUARY 17 (calendar day, FEBRUARY 21), 1927.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. FESS, from the Committee on the Library, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 11278]

The Committee on the Library, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 11278) authorizing the erection of a bronze statue of Henry Clay in the city of Caracas, Venezuela, having had the same under consideration, reports it to the Senate with the recommendation that said bill do pass.

Mr. Burton submitted the following report to the House from the Committee on Foreign Affairs:

The purpose of the bill is to authorize an expenditure for the erection of a statue of Henry Clay in the city of Caracas, Republic of Venezuela, including the expenses of the persons delegated by the Secretary of State to present, on behalf of the United States, such statue to the Republic of Venezuela. A brief summary of historical facts is appropriate:

On April 19, 1921, the Government of Venezuela presented to the American people a statue of Gen. Simon Bolivar, the hero of South American independence, which was unveiled at New York City by President Harding in the presence of a vast congregation, including a delegation sent from Venezuela. April 19, 1921, was the one hundred and eleventh anniversary of the independence of Venezuela and the centennial of the recognition of that independence by the United States. The delegation sent from Venezuela to attend the unveiling of the statue of Bolivar proceeded to Lexington, Ky., shortly afterwards and on May 21, 1921, deposited a bronze wreath at the tomb of Henry Clay. On the same day that the statue of Bolivar was unveiled in New York City (April 19, 1921) the Government of Venezuela published a decree naming the leading square in the heart of the city of Caracas in honor of Mr. Clay—Plaza Henry Clay.

The committee is of the opinion that an act of friendly reciprocity would be most fitting.

It appears that the work of Henry Clay toward obtaining recognition of the South American countries has secured for him the reverence and ever-increasing respect of those nations. Many of his greatest efforts, particularly during his service in the House of Representatives, were in advocating the cause of the revolting colonies in South America with an earnestness and persistence that caused him to be regarded as a hero throughout the whole of that continent. In advocating the cause of South America, he seems to have been far in advance of

others of his countrymen of that time. Three of his greatest orations were made in the House of Representatives (March 24, 1818, March 28, 1818, and May 10, 1820) on the emancipation and recognition of the South American States.

The outstanding effort in Clay's service as Secretary of State (1825-1829) is the proposed participation in the Panama Congress; and his instructions to the United States commissioners to that Congress are his great state paper and also an important state paper in the history of American diplomacy, laying down, as it does, the attitude of the United States toward newly recognized Republics of South America face to face with Europe. The first treaty negotiated by Clay as Secretary of State was with the so-called Federation of the Center of America, composed of the five countries now known as Central America. This federation was established in 1823 and dissolved in 1839. Among other Latin American countries there were treaties formed during the incumbency of Secretary Clay with Brazil and Mexico. The treaty with Colombia was ratified or proclaimed in 1825, when Clay was Secretary of State.

In the minds of the Latin American countries it may be said that Henry Clay is regarded as a figure of the Western Hemisphere rather than of the North American Continent. The committee believes that the case of Henry Clay in relation to South American countries is exceptional. So far as the committee has been able to ascertain, Clay is a more vital figure to the people of Latin America than any other statesman of his period, due to the fact, apparently, that he was the first to take up their cause at a time when there was little interest in the independence of Latin-American countries.

It is of interest to note that the International Conference of American States (Pan American Congress), which assembled in Santiago in 1923, unanimously voted for the erection of a monument to Henry Clay in Washington. This is but another indication of the esteem and gratitude that the Latin American nations feel toward him.

There appears to be good reason why such a statue should be placed at Caracas. Caracas is the birthplace of Bolivar. Bolivar and Henry Clay had the same purposes in view, namely, the emancipation and freedom of the colonies in Central and South America. The following exchange of correspondence is interesting:

BOGOTA, November 21, 1827.

SIR: I can not omit availing myself of the opportunity offered me by the departure of Colonel Watts, chargé d'affaires of the United States, of taking the liberty of addressing your excellency. This desire has long been entertained by me for the purpose of expressing my admiration of your excellency's brilliant talents and ardent love of liberty. All America, Colombia, and myself, owe your excellency our purest gratitude for the incomparable services you have rendered to us by sustaining our cause with a sublime enthusiasm. Accept, therefore, this sincere and cordial testimony, which I hasten to offer to your excellency, and to the Government of the United States, who have so greatly contributed to the emancipation of your southern brethren.

I have the honor to offer to your excellency my distinguished consideration.

Your excellency's obedient servant,

BOLIVAR.

(Columbia, at that time, was Greater Columbia, comprising what are now Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru.)

WASHINGTON, October 27, 1828.

SIR: It is very gratifying to me to be assured directly by your excellency that the course which the Government of the United States took on this memorable occasion, and my humble efforts, have excited the gratitude and commanded the approbation of your excellency. I am persuaded that I do not misinterpret the feelings of the people of the United States, as I certainly express my own, in saying that the interest which was inspired in this country by the arduous struggles of South America arose principally from the hope that, along with its independency, would be established free institutions, insuring the blessings of civil liberty. I can not allow myself to believe that I will not doubt that your excellency will, in due time, render a satisfactory explanation to Colombia and the world, of the parts of your public conduct which have excited any distrust; and that, preferring the true glory of our immortal Washington to the ignoble fame of the destroyers of liberty, you have formed the patriotic resolution of ultimately

placing the freedom of Colombia upon a sure and firm foundation. That your efforts to that end may be crowned with complete success I most fervently pray.

I request your excellency will accept assurances of my sincere wishes for your happiness and prosperity.

H. CLAY.

While, of course, it would be premature for the Republic of Venezuela to announce their decision toward acceptance prior to action by the United States in offering to provide a statue of Clay, the committee feels reasonably assured that entire cooperation would be forthcoming from the Venezuelan Government in the matter. It is pertinent to note that April 12, 1927, will mark the sesquicentennial of the birth of Henry Clay, and if ground could be broken for the statue on that day it would be an event of great Pan American significance and would probably have a far-reaching influence on the thought and attitude of the people of South America.

The committee has endeavored to analyze the advantages and disadvantages in connection with this proposal and is of the opinion that the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages, but does wish it to appear in the record that a search of the archives of the Department of State and of the Library of Congress fails to disclose any precedent in which the Government of the United States has presented to a foreign nation the statue of an American citizen for erection on foreign soil. The case of von Steuben is not analogous, as this was not the statue of an American citizen nor was it erected on foreign soil. It was the duplicate of a statue of a German general, who assisted us in our War for Independence, which was presented by the United States to the German nation in return for the gift of the statue of Frederick the Great. Appropriation was made for the "erection of a bronze replica of the statue of General von Steuben authorized to be erected in Washington; said replica to be presented to His Majesty the German Emperor and the German nation in return for the gift of the statue of Frederick the Great presented by the Emperor to the people of the United States." The statue of von Steuben now stand in Judiciary Square, Washington; the statue of Frederick the Great is now in the War College, Washington. The only Latin American countries that have presented statues to the United States are Venezuela, which presented the statue of Bolivar, now at New York City, and Argentina, which presented a statue of San Martin, now at Washington.



