

In planning this editorial I was reflecting on the new year. I began thinking about what was happening a hundred years ago, back in 1919. The most significant diplomatic event was the Paris Peace Conference, (image 1) and domestically the ratification of the 18th and 19th Amendments, but that seemed a bit much to cover in an editorial. In a quest for different ideas, I looked through the February 1919 edition of the *Monthly Catalog*—or *Monthly Catalogue United States Public Documents*. As I looked at what was published, it amazed me how many issues that we are dealing with now were also being addressed back then.

Decennial Census Preparation

Y 4.C 33/1:F 82/1—*Census, 1920 (14th).*

Fourteenth and Subsequent Decennial Censuses, conference report to accompany H.R. 14078, February 26, 1919. Most

of this hearing was on what was learned from the 13th Census and applied or modified for the 14th as well as discussion of a bill that would emerge every ten years, and the needs for funding and a temporary workforce to administer the census. Of interest—for the agricultural census “sex” was recommended to be

added to farms, because, “The indications are that the number of women engaged in farming in the United States is increasing, and there is a general demand for definite and reliable data on this subject.”

Illegal Aliens and Immigration

Y 4.IM 6/1:AL 4/6—*Deportation of Interned Aliens*—This discussion for H.R. 13965 was about dealing with individuals convicted before the war for violating neutrality laws, or for breaking a law during the war, and were thought to be “dangerous or undesirable.” Of interest—a debate about how many were interned, their legal status and rights, as well as the Department of Labor being the final authority to decide who to deport.

Y4.IM 6/1:IM 6/10/PT.1-2—*Prohibition of Immigration*—here debates on bills prohibiting immigration for four years—fears of labor shortages because need immigrant workers to fill jobs, labor shortages caused by war, as well as the hypocrisy of a nation of immigrants denying immigration. It included discussions about Italian immigration and how Mexicans were imported for labor due to shortages.

Making America Great Again

I 1.2:AM 3—*America, Americanism, Americanization ; containing Americanization speech of Hon. Franklin K. Lane at Hotel Astor, New York.*

Foreign Interference

Bolshevist propaganda in Washington, D.C.—Senate Document 386, February 11, 1919—Letter from the Attorney-General, transmitting, in response to a Senate resolution of February 5, 1919, a report as to the investigation being made by the Department of Justice in relation to the meetings held at Poli's Theater and the Masonic Temple in the City of Washington on February 2 and February 3, 1919 respectively.

The Attorney General is taking umbrage at a Senate Resolution that he was not doing his job, and that he had people at one of the meetings.

Y 3.P 96/3:6 G 31/3—*German Plots and Intrigues in the United States During the Period of our Neutrality.*

Discusses attempts by Germans to interfere with export of military supplies by instigating strikes, pro-German organizations lobbying congress, and trying to create a war between Mexico and the United States.

Department of Interior Request to Destroy Records

Disposition of Useless Papers in Department of Interior—H.Doc. 1754—February 3, 1919.

And surprisingly relevant to recent discussions in our community: Since there was no *Federal Register* at this time, the DOI petitioned the Committee on Disposition of Useless Papers in Executive Departments to dispose of records. Some were logical, like duplicates, orders for supplies, but several titles would have been useful to researchers:

- Monthly report of Indian schools prior to 1918
- Indian Commissioners register of vouchers
- 25 miscellaneous papers of Indian Commission hearings



Image 1: Versailles—Réunion du comité interalliés, [1919], Photo by Helen Johns Kirtland, Library of Congress—<https://www.loc.gov/item/2016652395/>