

February 5, 1917.

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION.

Water transportation
emergency.
Preamble.
Ante, p. 731.

WHEREAS, Congress did by "An Act To establish a United States Shipping Board for the purpose of encouraging, developing, and creating a naval auxiliary and naval reserve and a merchant marine to meet the requirements of the commerce of the United States with its Territories and possessions and with foreign countries; to regulate carriers by water engaged in the foreign and interstate commerce of the United States; and for other purposes," approved September 7,

1916, provide that "during any national emergency the existence of which is declared by proclamation of the President, no vessel registered or enrolled and licensed under the laws of the United States shall, without the approval of the board, be sold, leased, or chartered to any person not a citizen of the United States, or transferred to a foreign registry or flag";

And whereas, many shipowners of the United States are permitting their ships to pass to alien registers and to foreign trades in which we do not participate, and from which they cannot be bought back to serve the needs of our water-borne commerce without the permission of governments of foreign nations;

Now, therefore, I, WOODROW WILSON, President of the United States of America, acting under and by virtue of the authority conferred in me by said Act of Congress, do hereby declare and proclaim that I have found that there exists a national emergency arising from the insufficiency of maritime tonnage to carry the products of the farms, forests, mines and manufacturing industries of the United States to their consumers abroad and within the United States, and I do hereby admonish all citizens of the United States and every person to abstain from every violation of the provisions of said Act of Congress, and I do hereby warn them that all violations of such provisions will be rigorously prosecuted, and I do hereby enjoin upon all officers of the United States, charged with the execution of the laws thereof, the utmost diligence in preventing violations of said Act, and this my proclamation issued thereunder, and in bringing to trial and punishment any offenders against the same.

Transfers of American vessels to foreign ownership forbidden.

Violations to be prosecuted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington this 5th day of February in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seven-
 [SEAL.] teen and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and forty-first.

WOODROW WILSON

By the President:
 ROBERT LANSING
Secretary of State.