

Liberty Memorial Museum
Peace? Final Approved Video Script
05.10.06

Exhibit Summary

Peace? is an approximately 3-minute looping video presented on a 50” plasma monitor embedded in a mural-sized wall graphic that incorporates archival imagery, music, sound effects, and narration to create a thought-provoking exit experience for visitors.

Main Theme

The story focuses around the events from the armistice, November 11, 1918, to the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, June 23, 1919, contrasting the international euphoria of the war’s end with the changing political geography and vast social upheaval that roiled Central and Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. The complex postwar tensions, amplified within Germany by the severe terms of the peace, foreshadow the next stage of the Great War, more commonly known as World War II, and armed conflicts that persistently emerge even into the next century.

Exhibit Purpose

The purpose of the *Peace?* video experience is to:

- Summarize the period just after the war, from the celebrations of the armistice through the peace negotiations in Paris.
- To draw viewers into a reflection on the outcome of the war, its unresolved tensions and its place as an historical antecedent to World War II, and armed conflicts around the world throughout the 20th century and even into contemporary times.

Production and System Assumptions

- Approximately 3-minute looping video
- 1 plasma monitor (50-inch diagonal)
- Standard definition program to be displayed on a 16:9 monitor
- Provided as digital file in a format/resolution to be specified by ESI
- Stereo speakers
- Scripted narration
- Soundtrack with sound effects and music components
- Imagery derived from the Museum’s existing archival footage and stills collection, as well as historical imagery from stock sources and from other sources procured by the Museum in consultation with DLP

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| <p>Soldiers celebrating along the western front— Allied and Central Powers</p> <p>Civilians celebrating, Paris, London, Berlin, New York, etc.</p> <p>Crude battlefield graves</p> | 1 |
| <p>Wounded, walking, carried, transported</p> <p>Soldiers/convoys—battered, smiling, waving, joyous homecoming scenes</p> | 2 |
| <p>Establish scene of Versailles</p> | 3 |
| <p>Military/diplomatic convoys, arrivals, especially George, Clemenceau, and closing the series with Wilson</p> | 4 |
| <p>Wilson with other world leaders, generals</p> <p>Wilson giving speech ... his speech scene slowly dissolving to war devastation around the world</p> | 5 |
| | 6 |
| <p>War devastation around the world ... (inter-cut with maps showing post war borders/partitions??)</p> | 7 |
| <p>... scenes from places like Yugoslavia, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland ...</p> | 8 |

Peace?

In the first few moments of the video, visitors are drawn into the sights and sounds of Armistice Day, November 11, 1918. Scenes of celebration across Europe, the United States, and around the world evoke the sense of relief, the euphoria of victory, and the profoundly complex mingling of joy and sorrow of those who have lost loved ones, or whose lives have been otherwise maimed by the war; the celebration and homecoming scenes are laced with imagery of battered troops streaming away from the fronts.

Narrator

The Central Powers finally crumbled under the load of war. In 1918, at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, the armistice began on the Western Front.

Scenes of celebration and homecoming segue to scenes of world leaders, military leaders and diplomats gathering in Versailles for negotiations. We see the “Big Three:” President Wilson, Prime Minister Lloyd George of Britain, and Premier Georges Clemenceau of France.

In 1919 at Versailles, on the outskirts of Paris, negotiations for peace began, an enterprise critics saw as flawed from the beginning with neither Russia nor Germany invited to join.

For the first time in history, an American President helped guide diplomacy on the global stage. President Wilson reiterated the 14-point plan for peace he’d first presented in January of 1918.

Among his goals—self-determination for ethnic populations formerly ruled by the defeated imperial powers; and the creation of a League of Nations, an international forum for the maintenance of long-term peace in the world.

Imagery and narration begin to survey the conditions of a world devastated by continuing war, roiled by political revolution and provoked by many of the conditions of the Treaty.

It was a world fragmented by war.

Visuals

Audio / Show Flow

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| <p>scenes from Turkey, Greece, Syria, Mesopotamia... and map showing mandates—Mesopotamia, Palestine, Syria, and independent states of Yemen, Hajez, Armenia</p> | <p>9 The Allies separated the Ottoman Empire into French- and British-controlled mandates and small independent states. And in the Pacific and in Africa, Allies divvied up German colonies.</p> |
| <p>... Russian turmoil, highlight Bolsheviks, possible image of Lenin ...</p> | <p>10 From the former Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires, new states also emerged into <i>independence</i>, but old <i>ethnic</i> rivalries continued to undermine the peace.</p> |
| <p></p> | <p>11 Russia reeled with the chaos of the Bolshevik Revolution.</p> |
| <p>... specific imagery of Jerusalem ... imagery to signify Jewish identity (Star of David?) within Arab environment (Balfour Declaration)</p> | <p>12 Britain’s commitment to a Jewish National Home in Palestine—alongside contradictory assurances to the Palestinian Arabs—set the stage for continuing conflict in the Middle East.</p> |
| <p>... fighting in Shantung province, China (Kiaochow region, port of Tsingtoa)...African German colonies (Kamerun, Togo, South-West Africa, German East Africa), Pacific Islands (Papua, Samoa, Caroline, Marshall, Solomon, Mariana, Bismark Islands)</p> | <p>13 China and Japan renewed ancient disputes over territory in the Far East.</p> |
| <p></p> | <p>14 <i>Images and sound reveal the staggering cost of the war for Germany; dissolve to the treaty signing at Versailles.</i></p> |
| <p>Scenes of war-ravaged N. France and Belgium</p> <p>Scenes inside Germany, hunger, deprivation of citizens</p> <p>British war ships</p> <p>Versailles</p> | <p>15 German-occupied Northern France and Belgium lay in waste.</p> <p>While in their homeland, Germans starved, their resources spent on the war and their ports still blocked by the British fleet. Hunger—along with a Bolshevik threat of political revolution—prompted German leaders to accept harsh terms in a treaty they had no hand in negotiating, a treaty that would later breed vengeance.</p> |
| <p>Signing ceremony, parade of nations in Paris</p> <p>Newspaper headlines voicing US Congress rejection of Treaty, L of N</p> | <p>16 The Germans signed the Treaty of Versailles along with the European Allies, though Germany was at first barred from joining the League of Nations. The United States Congress refused to join and never ratified the treaty of Versailles.</p> |
| <p>Imagery of war/negotiations/treaty signing (?) in Turkey and Greece</p> | <p>17 Negotiations for all war-torn nations continued for more than four and a half years—a process lasting longer than the war itself.</p> |

Visuals

Audio / Show Flow

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| <p>Scenes of war monuments and cemeteries ... continue to unfold—underscoring “massive” cost of war ...</p> | <p>18 And still, the world was not at peace.</p> |
| | <p>19 <i>The formality of the leaders and diplomats, bringing an official end to the Great War, gives way to a series of lingering images of vast cemeteries and monument after monument inscribed with the names of fallen soldiers. As music and imagery begin to evoke the massive human cost of war.</i></p> |
| <p>Imagery of a mourner at a soldier’s grave</p> | <p>20 For those who lost loved ones, making peace with this war would require a lifetime.</p> |
| | <p>21 <i>The imagery of monuments and row upon row of white grave markers begins to include a few, then more, then crowds of women on Gold Star Mothers Pilgrimages.</i></p> |
| <p>Gold Star Mothers and supporters demonstrating, lobbying, imagery of Congress, signing of law Gathering crowds of GSM’s at ports,on ships ... at cemeteries ...</p> | <p>22 In America, mothers of fallen soldiers organized and lobbied for a decade until Congress agreed to pay for pilgrimages to Europe. From 1930 to ‘33 over 6,500 mothers visited the graves of their sacrifice.</p> |
| <p>... one mother at one son’s grave</p> | <p>23 <i>Imagery of WWI combat around the world is eerily “ghosted” over the scenes of cemeteries and monuments as the narrative continues.</i></p> |
| <p>Panoramic scenes of cemeteries, fields of white crosses and stars of David</p> | <p>24 The war ended only for those who died—over nine million combatants and a million civilians.</p> |
| <p>WWI combat images “ghosted” over scenes (possibly layer in portraits of individual soldiers) Imagery dissolves into series of subsequent wars and conflicts: -WWII</p> | <p>25 Did they die in vain? The armistice of 1918 stopped hostilities on the Western Front, but war continued elsewhere, and the Treaty of Versailles failed to bring lasting peace. It was called “the war to end all wars,” but it certainly did not. <i>The war imagery “ghosted” over acres of grave markers moves forward in time to contemporary imagery reflecting still unsettled hostilities.</i></p> |
| <p>-Korea -Vietnam -6 Days War (Gaza) -Gulf War -Bosnia -Current conditions in Iraq</p> | <p>26 The lasting legacy of the Great War is an uncomfortable question: Is peace possible?</p> |
| | <p>27 <i>Fade to black...Loop to beginning.</i></p> |