



## The Rockefeller Mystery

*A Commotion is on at Washington Because of the Charge That Mr. Roosevelt Made Public the Rockefeller Telegram.*

One of the greatest mysteries of recent origin relates to the charge that John D. Rockefeller sent telegrams to at least nine senators protesting against any anti-trust legislation. The public generally and many newspapers were loth to believe that Mr. Rockefeller adopted that method of communicating with the senators. It has been well understood that Rockefeller and other trust magnates have used their influence to prevent legislation on former occasions, but it has always been done in a covert way and many people have doubted that Mr. Rockefeller would undertake to improve on his old-time and very eminently successful methods.

But the various opinions entertained by newspapers on this subject may be better understood by reference to certain criticisms.

The Chicago Record-Herald appears to take the matter seriously and intimates that the prospects of legislation which Mr. Rockefeller does not like "brightened suddenly after a long period of gloom" and Mr. Rockefeller evidently deemed it necessary to enter quick protest.

The Chicago Chronicle quotes Mr. Hanna as saying that "Mr. Rockefeller does not do business that way." The Chronicle thinks that it is possible that some over-zealous member of Mr. Rockefeller's circle knowing that man's great influence with well-known senators thought he was in the habit of communicating his instructions to them as he would issue orders to the kerosene corporations and that "in this way the telegrams may have been dispatched by one of the Standard Oil attorneys without the direct knowledge or approval of Mr. Rockefeller."

The Louisville Courier-Journal, of which Henry Watterson is the editor, says that the alleged Rockefeller telegrams is "a pretense of opposition." The Courier-Journal says it is "a pretty trick though not a new one," and that the Rockefeller incident seems to have been planned "to surround with a spectacular eclat of capital's opposition a very innocent piece of legislation."

The Brooklyn Citizen refers to it as "the Rockefeller hoax." The Citizen says that while there is no doubt as to the interference of the Standard Oil company in national legislation "the American people are not willing to believe that Mr. Rockefeller suddenly lost his senses to the extent that he would send telegrams to senators." The Citizen says:

"Such orders as he has to convey are gladly and willingly executed by Senator Aldrich, of Rhode Island, who is the acknowledged legislative agent of the protected interests and who, moreover, has close family connections with the Rockefellers. It was a daughter of this Rhode Island senator who recently married the eldest son and heir of John D. Rockefeller."

The Citizen adds that "Anyway, there is nothing in the so-called 'trust busting' entered into by republican senators and congressmen to cause the Standard Oil company or any other trust the slightest uneasiness." And the Brooklyn paper adds, "All that President Roosevelt and trust busters of his type are aiming at is to prevent the real trust busters, the democrats, from attaining power. They are simply engaged in fooling the people and pretending to be at war with the trusts."

The Washington correspondent of the San Francisco Examiner, referring to this incident, says: "The administration and administration senators appear to have been caught red-handed in the act of pulling the wool over the eyes of the public." This correspondent says that "ev-

erybody in Washington is laughing at the boom-crang."

The Washington correspondent of the New York World, however, insists that he has good authority for saying that Rockefeller did send telegrams to at least nine senators. He says that every one of the men implicated denies that he received such a telegram with the exception of Senator Hale who declines to be questioned on the subject. This correspondent says that these telegrams were signed by John D. Rockefeller, J. D. Rockefeller, jr., W. H. Rogers, Walter Jennings, William Rockefeller and C. R. Archibald. The purport of these telegrams is said to be a general protest against all anti-trust legislation, and a protest against the Nelson amendment. It is bluntly stated by the World correspondent, as well as by other correspondents, that the story relating to the Rockefeller telegrams emanated from the White house; and the attitude of hostility suddenly assumed toward Mr. Roosevelt by republican leaders would indicate that this statement is generally believed in Washington. The World correspondent says that "almost every item of distinctive information connected with these telegrams has been traced through various channels back to some confidential conversation with the president." It is pointed out by the World correspondent that in these telegrams it was announced that an attorney for the Standard Oil company would follow with a substitute for the Nelson amendments. It is shown that an attorney did come and that the fact remains that a substitute for the Nelson amendment was tendered to Senator Nelson by an unnamed senator, which substitute was refused.

As a matter of fact, few people are surprised to learn that Mr. Rockefeller has communicated with senators on the subject of anti-trust legislation. The only surprise relates to the manner which Mr. Rockefeller is alleged to have adopted. The New York World says that this charge affects not only the integrity of the individual senators to whom the telegrams were said to have been sent, but the integrity of the senate as a body, and it calls upon the senate for an immediate and thorough investigation of the truth of the charge. The World says that the people would like to know who sent the telegrams, who received them and exactly what those telegrams said about pending anti-trust bills.

It is pointed out by a number of correspondents that while the senate could not be expected to investigate every charge made the fact that it has been generally and repeatedly stated that this charge emanated from the White house makes it necessary that the senate call for an investigation as to the truth of the story.

There are, however, a great many people who will be inclined to think that considerable noise has been made over the fact that the Standard Oil magnate sent telegrams to several senators when it is remembered that it has been generally understood that for several years republican leaders in both branches of congress have been doing the bidding of Rockefeller and other trust magnates with respect to every bit of proposed legislation wherein the people could find the least promise of relief. Repeatedly it has been charged that Senator Aldrich is the spokesman of the trust magnates on the floor of the senate and that all proposed legislation by the republican leaders with respect to the trusts was framed in accordance with the wishes of the trust magnates. These charges, so long and so generally made and so thoroughly believed by the American people, have never been investigated and no one has ever seriously proposed an investigation.

### A Big Navy League.

The most un-American movement recently started under the guise of patriotism is the "Navy League of the United States," organized with ex-Secretary of the Navy Tracy at its head. An official statement of the purposes and plans of the league will be found on another page. It will be noticed that similar leagues have been formed in England, Germany, France, Italy and Belgium, and the activity of the other leagues is given as a reason for the formation of this league. The object of this league is "to aid in strengthening our sea power," and the members are "to learn what the navy means, what is, and what should be its actual efficiency and what is its relative standing

with other navies." These leagues are mutually helpful; as soon as the leagues in England, Germany, France, Italy and Belgium secure an increase in the navies of those countries the increase thus secured will be used as an argument in favor of an increase here and the increase here, when secured, can be used by the leagues abroad as an excuse for further increases, and so on ad infinitum. There is no limit to such increases except the burden-carrying power of the taxpayer and the object of these leagues is to convince him (or those who act for him) that it is his patriotic duty to carry a big navy on his back because the deluded citizens of other countries are carrying big navies. This is another outgrowth of imperialism and the league's growth will be in pro-

portion to the imperialistic sentiment developed. The league's work may be illustrated by a parable:

A, B, C, and D have farms surrounding a lake. Mr. Navy League calls on A and explains to him that he is in constant danger of being attacked by his neighbors and that as a matter of precaution he should keep an armed boat anchored in front of his house (Mr. Navy League probably knows of some competent boat builders who are willing to build the boat and he can also furnish men to take charge of it). Having convinced A that he needs a boat, Mr. Navy League finds it easy to convince B that he needs two boats, C that he needs three boats and D that he needs four boats. By this time A is in position to be convinced of his need of several more boats to put him upon an equal footing with his neighbors, and Mr. Navy League is thus kept busy stimulating patriotism, recommending ship builders and furnishing men to be given life commissions in the navy. Question: How long before A, B, C, and D would find out that boat building was absorbing too large a share of the income from their farms? How long before they would find out that it was better to have fewer boats rotting in the water, waiting for war, and more wealth producing assets convertible into war vessels on demand? There is, in the nature of the case, no limit to the compilation in navy building for each nation tries to overstep the others and each stimulates the others to new enlargements. We need fewer "navy leagues" and more associations for the cultivation of sentiment in favor of the justice and fair dealing which make for peace.

### A Perpetual Debt.

Secretary Shaw is the first secretary of the treasury to suggest the advisability of a permanent national debt. To be sure, he puts it in the alternative and uses it to scare congress into an asset currency, but the fact that he considers it at all shows the length to which he has gone in surrendering to the dictation of Wall street. He says:

"The frequent purchase and retirement of bonds renders the amount available for circulation gradually less, while a rapidly growing population, additional banking facilities, and expanding trade suggest the need of an ever increasing circulation. I therefore believe the time has arrived when it will be necessary to adopt one of two policies: either the government debt must be perpetuated as a basis for national bank circulation, and additional bonds issued as occasion may require, or some other system must be provided."

What is that other system? The asset currency that does not require a bond basis.

During the war national banks were established to give a market for bonds, now bonds must be issued to give a basis for banking. And if the people do not like a perpetual debt, let them accept an asset currency as the least of the two evils. That is the same logic that was applied to the treasury notes and greenbacks. The administration first announced that they would be redeemed in gold on demand and then the people were told they must choose between an endless chain and the retirement of government paper. The financiers refused to consider the wisdom of exercising the government's right to choose the coin of payment—a plan which would have stopped the endless chain without retiring the paper—a plan the mere mention of which by Secretary Manning stopped a run on the treasury gold. And so now it never occurs to Secretary Shaw and his tutors in finance that the substitution of greenbacks for bank notes would render a perpetual debt unnecessary and at the same time remove the excuse for an asset currency. The greenback is better than a bank note, for it is as secure as a bank note with a government bond behind it and has the advantage of being a legal tender.

But no. The greenback is not a part of Mr. Shaw's plan, for the bankers get no profit out of its issue and cannot control the volume in their own interests.

Here is the money question again—an important phase of it—and yet the reorganizers are as silent about it as the republican leaders are. The republicans seem to think they can do anything now, but the test of a system comes in the storm rather than in the calm, and when the storm comes neither a perpetual debt nor an asset currency will prove acceptable.

But Secretary Shaw is certainly earning a position at the head of some big New York bank—the reward that usually comes to the treasury official who turns the treasury department over to the New York financiers.