

Taxpayers vs. Tax-eaters

If you want to embarrass a jingo, ask him where the money for frenzied preparedness is to come from. It is easy enough to swagger around and talk about getting ready for war, but who is to bear the burden? The tax-payers have to foot the bills, and they are not scared. They are not only not frightened themselves, but they can be relied upon to put a quietus upon this war bogey when an attempt is made to raise unnecessary taxes.

What democrat will be rash enough to propose an increase in import duties? The party has been trying for a generation to reduce the tariff, and has at last succeeded. It required an almost superhuman effort—shall we now turn around and undo the work? The republicans would laugh us out of the next campaign. They would say that preparedness was only a pretext—that the increase was a confession that tariff reform was a failure.

It is not necessary to consider the possibility of an increase in the tax on whiskey and beer—the distillers and brewers would oppose it because it would burden their business, and the temperance element would object to increasing the government's dependence on these sources of revenue.

And who will say that the income tax should be increased? A reduction in the exemption would be resented by the large number who would be affected, and an increase in the rate on big incomes would arouse objection among the jingoes themselves.

There remains one course to be considered—bonds. Yes, any amount could be raised by an issue of bonds if congress were foolish enough to authorize them, but congressmen have to stand for election next year, and who would be willing to defend a bond issue for wars that nobody wants and that only a few expect?

The democratic party is the champion of the producing masses, and it can not afford to invite defeat by taking sides with the tax-eaters against the tax-payers. A nation like ours which intends no injustice need not fear attack—it need not exhaust itself in unnecessary preparation for improbable wars.

W. J. BRYAN.

A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT

On another page will be found the address recently delivered at Frankfort, Kentucky, by Comptroller Williams. It is well worth reading. The country will be astounded to learn of such extortion being practiced by so large a number of the national banks. It is fortunate for the people that we have such a man as John Skelton Williams in so important a position. He is a "Daniel come to judgment." According to his statement some of the men against whom he inveighs could give Shylock points on usury.

Some of the august members of congress are cautiously announcing that they are in favor of a program of reasonable preparedness for war. The fact that "reasonable" is a descriptive that is capable of almost any meaning or may mean almost any figure will not, however, save these gentlemen from the scorn of those who are demanding that we spend everything in sight and mortgage the next generation for the purpose of preparing for an enemy who will be as invisible for years as he is now.

PEACE MEETING

In response to an invitation extended to Mr. Bryan to attend a peace meeting under the auspices of the Peace committee of the Panama Pacific exposition, Mr. Bryan sent the following telegram:

"Washington, D. C., Oct. 11, 1915.—Peace Committee, Panama Pacific Exposition, San Francisco: I regret exceedingly that it is impossible for me to participate in your meeting. My heart is with you in your efforts to promote universal peace. We should do all in our power to bring the European war to an end; but if we can not yet stay the hand of blood over there we should at least cultivate here the spirit of peace and oppose any policy which would stimulate hatred toward other nations or transplant upon American soil the theory that peace can be either insured or promoted by force and fear."
W. J. BRYAN.

WORSHIPPING THE WAR GOD

An enemy of a great European once said of him that he was the old statesman who "could improvise the convictions of a lifetime." Borrowing the idea, it may be said that the advocate of preparedness manufactures history to suit his purpose. One of the exponents of preparedness thus expresses himself:

"There are those, of course, gluttons of ease and peaceful prosperity, who think they have inherited the ages and that no chance may dispossess them, who cluster greedily about the Barmecide feast of the Pacifists.

"The thought of danger, of self-sacrifice, of payment in blood and treasure and tears and sweat for the privilege of continuing the enjoyment of their good fortune—is hideous."

"Gluttons of ease." Which furnishes us the highest type of activity—the camp, or the farm and the factory? And "self-sacrifice," where is it best exemplified, in war or in peace?

The glorifying of war is becoming a fine art. The hideous features of the war god are being masked; he is being represented as the very embodiment of strength, virtue and honor. If he is thus idolized before we adopt the plan of frenzied preparedness, what may we expect if we deliberately adopt the policy that has led Europe into this carnival of blood?

It is both startling and alarming that while the cruelties and inhumanities of the European war have aroused in most Americans a greater desire for peace, they have stirred others to the praise of all that is brutal and barbarous.

TARIFF COMMISSION UNNECESSARY

The following letter from the president, in answer to an inquiry of former Governor Cox of Ohio, will be generally approved by the party:

"My Dear Governor: I sincerely appreciate your letter of August 24.

"The matter of which it speaks has been very much in my mind, and my thought is this: The full powers of a tariff commission are already lodged in existing organs of the government; most of them, and really more than the former commission had, in the bureau of foreign and domestic commerce of the department of commerce, and others (powers of investigation chiefly) in the hands of the new federal trade commission.

"Perhaps it would be better if these various powers were assembled in the heads of one bureau or department, but aside from that I think the machinery exists for a thoroughly scientific treatment of tariff questions. If anything is lacking to give these powers efficiency I am, of course, heartily in favor of doing it.

"Please accept my warmest regards and my sincere appreciation of your interesting letter.

"Cordially and sincerely yours,
WOODROW WILSON."

HOPE IN HAITI

American intervention in Haiti became a necessity. Rival clans were terrorizing the country and practicing piracy on land. The United States, under the Monroe doctrine, must guard Haiti from European interference, and it could not do so without suppressing the lawlessness which invited foreign interference. The Haitians will learn that the government of the United States is a better friend to them than the native chiefs, who have been little better than bandits in uniform. Under American guardianship all foreigners as well as all Haitians will have an equal chance, and prosperity as well as peace will come to the black republic.

W. J. BRYAN.

THE BASIS OF RESPECT

Those who preach the doctrine of preparedness adopt the theory that our country will not be respected unless it has a big army and navy. Strange that the lessons of every day should so little impress those who deal with international affairs. In private life respect does not depend upon physical preparedness.

Why is the unarmed individual safe? First, because he tries to so act that no one will want to harm him; and second, because his government will punish any one who injures him. And so with the nation. It will do nothing to make nations want to injure it, and all know that its defensive powers will be unlimited if it ever is attacked.

The jingoes will meet their Waterloo when they lay their plans before the representatives of the tax-payers. Where is the money for frenzied preparedness to come from?

Let Democrats Decide

The republican papers are quite unanimous in their advice to the president to disregard his party and join the republicans in a policy of frenzied preparedness. The scheme is too transparent to succeed. These same papers could have assured the president the same support if he had been willing to adopt the republican policy on the tariff question, the currency question or the trust question, but the president preferred to rely on the democrats and, as a result, he has gone forward making an unprecedented record for important reforms.

Of course, the republicans want preparedness or any thing else that will give them an excuse for increasing the tariff. If they could persuade or force the democratic party to become responsible for an increase in the tariff they would declare tariff reform a failure, and point to the increased import duties as proof.

The democrats have to bear the responsibility and they ought to shape the policy of the government. The democrats who go with the republicans on preparedness—if there are any—will assume a grave responsibility. The democratic party can be trusted to respond to every real need, but it can not afford to allow republicans to lead it into a scheme to tax the people for the benefit of the manufacturers of battle-ships and munitions of war. There has not been a time since our government was organized when the American people had less reason to fear an attack from any nation. There is no excuse for the attempt to scare money out of the pockets of the people.
W. J. BRYAN.

A WORD TO FRIENDS

Commoner readers who approve of Mr. Bryan's efforts through the columns of his paper in the interest of peace and good government, are earnestly requested to make the best possible use of each issue of the paper. After having read your copy of The Commoner, why not mark some of the articles that you feel are the most helpful and invite one or more of your friends or acquaintances to read such articles? To any of your acquaintances who are likely to be interested, explain the work The Commoner is doing and invite them to allow you to send in their subscriptions to Mr. Bryan's paper. By this method let the influence of the paper grow from the inside out—through the co-operation of the earnest men and women who are so deeply interested in this work. We make a clubbing rate of five yearly subscriptions for \$3, or sixty cents each; if it is not convenient to send the five subscriptions at once, just send those you do secure with remittance at the rate of sixty cents each, and say that you will try to send more later. Mr. Bryan will appreciate your co-operation in extending the sphere of usefulness of The Commoner. May we depend upon your help? If you can not act just now, write the editor of The Commoner a card saying that he may count upon you, and that you will report the result of your efforts later.—Associate Editor.

A Boston paper accuses Congressman Gardener of spending his vacation in the Canadian forests! Why did he not spend it drilling at some preparation camp? If such a distinguished representative of the Knights of Fear takes to the woods at a critical time like this, when imaginary invasion threatens us on every hand, how can we expect mere common clay to keep in readiness to repel the foe? Shame on you, Gussie. Your example is demoralizing.

LIGHT IN MEXICO

It seems that Carranza is to be recognized. It is worth trying. He risked everything when he took up the fight against Huerta—he was the choice of those who organized to resist the new despotism and to secure agricultural reforms. He has shown courage and perseverance—it took both to main his position. His dispute with Villa looked foolhardy, but he has been able to overcome the forces of that intrepid leader. He has succeeded, and "Nothing succeeds like success."

The policy of "watchful waiting" has won—our nation has kept out of war with Mexico. A good many have been killed—but not as many as would have been killed if the United States had intervened. Time will tell whether Carranza will wisely improve his opportunity, and become a national hero. Those who have the good of Mexico at heart will wish him well.
W. J. BRYAN.