

The Commoner

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No Cancellation Without Disarmament

On another page will be found an editorial from the Indianapolis Star, which has the appearance of being part of a propaganda. Great Britain suggests cancellation of all the inter-Ally debts. Now come Morgan and Kahn, the two leading American representatives of foreign financiers, and approve the suggestion. The American people are told frankly that these debts are not worth anything to begin with and that Europe really does not owe us anything and, besides, it will injure us to make them pay the debts even if they do owe us.

There never was any thought of paying these debts; the advocates of unconditional cancellation have just been waiting until the time was opportune to commence the campaign. The time seems to be ripe and simultaneous utterances now point to a common purpose.

Senator Borah has pointed out that no suggestion of DISARMAMENT accompanies the request for cancellation. This is the point upon which attention should be focused. The debts are WORTHLESS and NEVER WILL BE PAID, but cancellation WITHOUT CONDITION would not aid peace; it would more likely insure another war. The cancellation of the debts would give the Allies more credit with which to develop a new preparedness based on the doctrine that peace can be preserved only by terrorism. The United States has no desire to encourage another war; its interest is in the establishment of universal and perpetual peace. Our nation asked for no indemnities; its compensation was to be found in the abolition of war. As we were willing to pay over thirty billions for a peace secured by slaughter—and are not yet sure that we have it—we ought to be willing to give eleven billions for a real peace secured by peaceable means. It would be worth that. But the case is stronger than that. We may be able to trade a WORTHLESS debt for a PRICELESS peace if we make disarmament the condition upon which the debt is cancelled. Why not say to the Allies: Whenever you can get together on any terms satisfactory to yourselves—so get together that you can disarm—you can take the eleven billions and divide it among yourselves; but no cancellation without disarmament.

The cancellation could be progressive so that it would be a guarantee that disarmament would follow. The debt could be cancelled from time to time, proportionately as disarmament was accomplished. If the world will disarm we can so reduce the appropriations for army and navy as to save the eleven billions in a comparatively short time. Why not such a settlement? Chiefly because the militarists, navalists and manufacturers of war materials in this country and in Europe do not want the world to disarm. The real question at issue is whether the peace sentiment of the world is strong

enough to overthrow the spirit of militarism backed by the greed of the munition manufacturers.

W. J. BRYAN.

NO REOPENING OF PROHIBITION

No candidate for the Senate or Congress who favors the reopening of the prohibition question should receive the support of those who believe in the Eighteenth Amendment. The wine and beer proposition is a fraud; those who stand back of it want a saloon—the old fashioned saloon with all the vices that go with it. If a Congress were elected on a wine and beer platform it would proceed at once to reopen the entire liquor question by refusing appropriations to enforce prohibition and that would mean that this nation could not consider any other question until the liquor question was again settled.

The wets know no party; they are not bound by allegiance to any organization. They regard the obtaining of a drink as the only right guaranteed by the Constitution, and in talking of Constitutional rights they ignore the Eighteenth Amendment which is now a part of the Constitution. The real issue is LAW versus LAWLESSNESS. No man who appeals to the underworld for votes can be trusted to represent a law-abiding constituency. The dries must be as much interested in the enforcement of the law as the wets are in the violation of the law. That means that the dries must make the liquor question the supreme issue wherever there is a candidate who stands for intoxicants.

W. J. BRYAN.

HARMONY IN NEBRASKA

The Democratic primary in Nebraska, which resulted in the nomination of Gilbert M. Hitchcock for a third term as senator and of Charles W. Bryan for governor, together with a strong ticket of loyal and in most cases experienced Democrats for other state and congressional offices, was proof positive of the final healing of the division in the party in the state. Mr. Bryan has contended for years that no permanent forward progress could be made in the adoption of the great reforms on which all Democrats are united until the liquor question was eliminated. It is significant that the only candidates in the July primary in Nebraska who ran on a distinctly wet platform were entered in the Republican contests, where, it is interesting to note, they were decisively beaten. With both parties dry and committed to legislation to keep the state and nation dry, the way is open again for complete and deserved Democratic success.

Leagues of women voters in various states have undertaken to supply a deficiency that exists under the primary method of making nominations by eliciting from candidates themselves the facts about themselves and their records that voters should know before presuming to cast an intelligent ballot. The effort is well worth while, and the women are rendering a distinctly valuable service that no agency of government or parties supplies.

Senator Hitchcock

The Democrats of Nebraska are again united after a period of discord that lasted twelve years. The liquor question entered politics in Nebraska in 1910 with the advent of the county option issue. County option failed, and was succeeded by prohibition as an issue which triumphed in 1916 by a majority of 29,000. This was followed by national prohibition and woman suffrage amendments. On these two questions, the Democratic party was divided, and the issue entered into every campaign from that time up to and including two years ago. On this question, Senator Hitchcock led one side while Chas. W. Bryan and I were active on the other side. As long as the issue lasted there was neither compromise nor truce; but the issue is settled. Women are now voting and woman's influence will be felt in the settlement of every issue which arises hereafter. Prohibition is a fact and the party stands united for the enforcement of both the federal and the state prohibition laws.

On these subjects Senator Hitchcock and the dries are in entire accord. There never has been any personal antagonism between the individuals who fought on opposite sides in these contests. They worked together on economic questions before liquor became an issue. For sixteen years, from 1894 to 1910, the state platforms were adopted by unanimous vote, and during that time Nebraska took her place in the front rank at Democratic National Conventions. In fact, Nebraska wrote in advance the platforms that the national party afterward adopted. The division over the liquor question, regrettable as it was, could not be avoided. Time brought the issue to its day of harvest and the people settled it. All should rejoice that as a disturbing factor it has been eliminated. Mr. Hitchcock and the Bryans fought together for twenty years before they were divided by the liquor question. Why should they not fight together now that that is eliminated and they agree upon what should be done?

Senator Hitchcock has served in the Senate twelve years and has rendered great service to his party. I have not always approved of his votes and his speeches, but the things about which we have differed are past. On the questions now before Congress and the country, we are in agreement. On the revenue bill, Mr. Hitchcock has fought with great ability and energy on the people's side, opposing the efforts that have been made to shift the burden of taxation from the rich to the poor. On the tariff question, he is a tower of strength to the people's side and has with great ability presented the agricultural protest to the highway robbery contemplated in the high tariff schedules. His experience equips him for still greater service as a champion of rural America; he ought to have the support of every Democrat in the state.

And why not the support of progressive Republicans? It is no reflection on the Republican candidate for senator to say that he cannot give