

should obey, but he takes a similar risk if he is not willing to assume responsibility for a change of plan where conditions compel the change. If the disobedience of the subordinate officer is due to cowardice or to the substitution of a selfish for a patriotic interest, he is condemned; but he is likewise to be condemned if, either from cowardice or because of a selfish interest, he permits the interest of his country to be jeopardized rather than live up to the responsibilities which his position imposes upon him. In the case under consideration, the president takes the responsibility for an official act which he regards as necessary to his country's welfare, and the people must decide whether or not he is justified; and those who refuse to act with him also assume responsibility and they too must abide the judgment of the public.

Such a change has taken place since the Baltimore platform was adopted. Had the democrats in convention assembled been confronted by the condition which now exists and had they known what those now know who voted for repeal, no such plank would ever have been placed in the platform. The convention's attention was not even brought to the fact that a majority of the democrats in the house had voted against the free tolls measure, and that it had, in fact, been passed by a combination of A MINORITY OF THE DEMOCRATS and A MAJORITY OF THE REPUBLICANS. The platform plank which is now being worshipped as if it were the only plank in the platform was in reality a rebuke to the democrats in congress when the convention had reason to suppose that it was endorsing the action of a majority of the democrats when it endorsed the action of congress. It was more than that; it was, in fact, though not upon its face, an endorsement of the doctrine of subsidy which the party had taken pains to denounce in the same platform.

Third, moreover, this plank of the platform deals with an international question and must be accepted with the understanding that we act jointly with other nations in international affairs. Even if the plank had not been contradicted by another plank in the platform; even if it had not concealed a subsidy policy repugnant to democratic principle and history; even if it had not rebuked the democrats in congress; even if conditions had not changed, still dealing with an international question, it should be taken as the expression of a wish rather than as the expression of a determination, for no nation can afford to purchase a small advantage in the face of a universal protest. If a nation desires to array itself against the world, it should be sure that the thing which it is to gain is worth what it costs.

The president, knowing that every commercial nation except our own construes the treaty as a pledge of equal treatment, would have been recreant to his trust had he failed to point out to the American people that our diplomatic relations would be seriously disturbed by the carrying out of the free tolls policy.

#### THE "SURRENDER TO ENGLAND"

The friends of free tolls gave conclusive proof that they were conscious of the weakness of their position when, in opposing the repeal of free tolls, they attempted to appeal to prejudice rather than to reason. They charged with a vehemence that increased as the case grew more desperate that the president was "surrendering to England."

What has Great Britain done to justify the accusation that she is trying to dictate to this country? She has simply called attention to the terms of the treaty and asked for arbitration of the question of construction, in case this government differs from the British government in the construction to be placed upon the language. The very men who are so insistent upon construing the treaty to permit free tolls delayed for months the ratification of the treaty with Great Britain because of their opposition to any arbitration of the subject. In other words, they construed the treaty to permit discrimination and then objected to allowing any international court to express an opinion upon the subject. If, as a matter of fact, the treaty grants the rights which Great Britain claimed, is it a "surrender to Great Britain" for our nation to repeal a law that raised that question? The repeal of the law can not be construed to be a construction of the treaty. It is simply a refusal on the part of the United States to raise that question in that way. In the controversy over the Welland canal, Canada withdrew a discrimination which she had made in favor of Canadian ships, "in order that no cause for friction with the United

States authorities in regard to the matter should exist."

Why cannot the United States withdraw a discrimination for the same reason? When the treaty involved was before the senate for ratification, an attempt was made to so amend it as to permit a discrimination in favor of coastwise vessels, but it was voted down by a decided majority. With this record to support them, is it strange that foreign nations question our right to make an exception in favor of American vessels?

Before passing from this branch of the subject it is worth while to remember that this is not the first time democratic legislation in behalf of the people has been denounced as a "surrender to England." Every time our party has attempted to reduce the tariff we have been confronted with the charge that the lowering of the tariff would benefit England and that we were surrendering our markets to foreign manufacturers. This sham issue was raised by the beneficiaries of protection; they claimed to possess a superior patriotism, but every well-informed citizen knew that their real reason was not patriotic but selfish. They were growing fat through the taxation of the American people and they attempted to appeal to prejudice merely to divert attention from the real issue. It is a fact, the significance of which will not be overlooked, that those who are using this "surrender to England" slogan now are using it to secure the same sort of advantage that the protectionists secured. This time the benefit is to go into the pockets of the owners of vessels engaged in the coastwise trade, and knowing that they can not defend their position with democratic arguments, the advocates of free tolls attempt to create a prejudice against the nation which entered into a treaty with us, and which happens, also, because of its large shipping interests, to be the country most interested in preventing discrimination. The "surrender to England" argument is being used now just as it has been used in the past and for the benefit of the same selfish interests, but now that the people have secured tariff reduction they can no longer be frightened by this subterfuge.

#### SUBSIDY OR NO SUBSIDY

When we come to consider the repeal measure upon its merits, there are just two questions to be decided:

First, is it desirable for the democratic party to abandon its historic position and become the advocate of subsidies and bounties? And, second, if it is desirable, what is the democratic party willing to sacrifice in international prestige and in world influence in order to secure the advantage which these subsidies promise to a few people?

No party can afford to adopt a principle without considering how far the principle extends or what its adoption involves. In the past the democratic party has been able to consistently oppose every form of governmental favor because it has stood for "equal rights to all and special privileges to none." It has not only opposed the bounty when given directly, but it has with equal earnestness opposed the bounty given indirectly through a protective tariff. It has denounced as unconstitutional the voting of the people's money into the pockets of the few who can secure the ear of the legislator. Having grounded itself upon a principle, it could follow that principle wherever it applied and by its steadfastness to that principle, it has converted a nation. Suppose it now turns its back upon that principle and embarks upon the subsidizing of a few vessels; where can it draw the line? Will not the precedent once established make it difficult for the party to oppose each new application of the principle which will be demanded? If we are to give bounties to coastwise vessels for one reason, we will be asked to give bounties to some other corporations for reasons equally as good; and the party's power to protect the public treasury will be paralyzed.

It must be remembered, too, that our coastwise vessels are largely controlled by a monopoly. The Alexander report on this subject, published this year, says:

"With the exception of the Pacific coast trade proper, it was shown that the line traffic is handled by comparatively few companies and that these are largely controlled by railroads and shipping consolidations. Thus, in the entire Atlantic and gulf coastwise trade (exclusive of all inland waterway and purely local carriers), 28 lines, representing 235 steamers of 549,821 gross tons, furnish the line service. Of this number of lines, 10 are railroad owned and represent 128 steamers of 340,084 gross tons, or

54.5 per cent of the total number of steamers in the trade and 61.9 per cent of the tonnage. Seven lines, operating 71 steamers of 175,971 gross tons in the coastwise trade, belong to the Eastern Steamship corporation and the Atlantic, Gulf & West Indies steamship lines, and represent in the aggregate nearly 30 per cent of the total number of steamers and 32 per cent of the tonnage. Combining the two interests, it appears that the railroads and two Atlantic coast shipping consolidations control nearly 85 per cent of the steamers and nearly 94 per cent of the gross tonnage engaged in the entire Atlantic and gulf coastwise trade. ATTENTION MAY BE CALLED AGAIN TO THE FACT THAT VERY FEW OF THE ROUTES BETWEEN ANY TWO PORTS ON THE ENTIRE ATLANTIC AND GULF COASTS ARE SERVED BY MORE THAN ONE LINE (pp. 369-370, 382, 382)."

The law prohibits the use of the canal by vessels when owned by railroads with which the vessels would compete, but the report shows how these vessel owners have dealt with the public in the past.

The advocates of free tolls argue that the subsidies voted to ships in the coastwise trade will come back to the public through decreased freight rates on the transcontinental lines. This is the same old protectionist argument. This reduction as a matter of fact is improbable because the water rate is so much below the freight rate that the reduction of \$1.25 a ton in the water rate will not compel a reduction in the transcontinental rates. But even if it could be shown that free tolls would reduce transcontinental rates, it should be remembered that these rates, if excessive, can be reduced by the interstate commerce commission. Why should we disturb our foreign relations in order to do at the isthmus what we can do directly by regulation?

When the student of this subject understands that the republican party is the friend of bounties and that the democratic party is the inveterate foe of bounties, he will understand why FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE REPUBLICANS in congress voted AGAINST the repeal of the bounties, while FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE DEMOCRATS in congress joined the president in favoring the repeal of the law granting bounties.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S APPEAL

The president's right to expect the support of congress when he deals with foreign nations is so strongly presented in Congressman Palmer's speech (which appears on another page) that the subject need not be elaborated here. The chief executive speaks for the nation in international affairs, and it is only fair to assume that he speaks advisedly when he declares that intercourse with other nations is seriously embarrassed by the free tolls law which he seeks to repeal. The democrats and republicans who responded to his appeal will find it easy to defend their course—the burden of proof will be on those of either party who rejected his advice.

#### THE UNITED STATES AS A WORLD POWER

Even if the democratic party were willing to be guilty of apostasy to its principles; even if it were convinced that the republicans had been right in favoring subsidies and the democratic party wrong in opposing them, how much would it be willing to pay in national prestige and in world influence for the privilege of following at the tail end of the republican procession on this subject? We occupy today a proud position among the nations; we are the foremost advocate of peace and arbitration; we are becoming more and more a moral factor throughout the world. Can we afford to surrender this position? Can we afford to belittle the great enterprise which has reached its consummation at the isthmus?

If our nation desires to be measured by intellectual and ethical standards, how unworthy to brag of our strength and to threaten to use that strength! "We are ready to fight" does not arouse the enthusiasm that it did a few centuries ago. Brute force is not the level upon which this nation settles its controversies today; the question is not what we CAN do, but what we OUGHT to do.

The path of history is strewn with the wreck of nations that boasted that they were all powerful; they went down under Jehovah's inexorable law,—and the "God who ruled over Babylon is the God who is ruling yet." This question must be decided on moral principles, and not by the counting of our regiments and battleships. What shall it profit a nation if it conquers the whole world and loses its faith in the doctrine that "righteousness exalteth a nation!"

W. J. BRYAN.