

# Mr. Bryan's Future Plans

[From the Washington Post, June 10, 1915.]

Former Secretary Bryan intends to devote his entire energies for some time to come to the enlightenment of the American people with respect to the principles at stake that compelled him to resign as secretary of state. He proposes to set no limitations upon his activities in that direction with the end in view that public sentiment will be developed that will enable President Wilson to employ remedies to prevent war that he now finds it impossible to employ.

That is the way in which Mr. Bryan expresses the idea he has in mind. This idea, bluntly put, apparently is that public sentiment must be so aroused as to compel the president to reverse himself and accept certain methods he thus far has rejected in solving problems forced upon him through the European war and its effects upon American commerce and the rights of American citizens.

## To Devote Whole Time to It

If the principles for which he stood were so vital that he felt constrained to resign rather than sacrifice them, Mr. Bryan believes that it is his duty to devote his whole time and all his ability toward imbuing the American people with the same ideals. Mr. Bryan made it quite plain yesterday that he was impressed with the righteousness of his position and that it was his greatest duty at the present moment to bring his countrymen to his way of thinking.

He will not issue his appeal to the people through any circumscribed medium. His arguments will not be found in selected newspapers or magazines. They will not be made the subject of lectures on any chautauqua platform. Mr. Bryan wants the largest possible audience. He wishes to reach every man, woman and child of reasoning age, among the one hundred millions of his fellows in the United States, and to reach them he intends to submit what he has to say to that vast audience through the medium of the press of the entire country.

## Other Statements to Follow

He began the inauguration of this plan yesterday when he issued a statement, carefully prepared, that emphasized certain points of difference between the president and himself. This statement was confined to two points. They were the application of his international peace treaties to the controversy with Germany through the appointment of an international commission to investigate the facts, and, second, action that would prohibit American citizens from traveling on belligerent ships or on vessels carrying munitions of war.

This, it is known, is but the beginning of the campaign of education Mr. Bryan has in contemplation. He does not intend to "glut" the market for his propaganda. His first statement coming hot and crisp upon the heels of his resignation will be published in every morning paper in the country today, and within a few days in all the weeklies and periodicals. After it has been permitted to settle in the public mind other arguments will follow and other phases of the differences between the president and Mr. Bryan will be discussed at length. It is also the purpose of Mr. Bryan to devote the editorial columns of The Commoner to this cause, and wherever it may be advisable he will make public addresses. It is upon the press, however, that Mr. Bryan will depend for his communication with the American people.

## Believes It Unequal Treatment

In his next statement the former secretary probably will discuss the

subject of what he believes to be unequal treatment in American efforts to compel consideration for American rights. From the outset he has urged that there should have accompanied the first note to Germany one of equal sharpness to Great Britain demanding a cessation of her violation of the rules of international law with regard to American commerce and her general violation of the rights of neutrals.

President Wilson has insisted that this subject should not be involved with the German note, but should be dealt with on its own merits. It was understood yesterday that the president already has prepared such a note, and that it will be sent at once to Great Britain, calling emphatic attention to her treatment of American cargoes of cotton and other shipments not held to be contraband under international law, as defined prior to the present war.

## Bryan Gets Many Congratulations

Mr. Bryan, it is known, feels greatly encouraged in the step he has taken by the many telegrams of congratulations he has received from all parts of the country. Yesterday there was a procession of messenger boys carrying telegrams to his residence in Calumet place. He did not think it proper to divulge the texts of these messages, but many of them came from distinguished persons, and supported him in the decisive stand he has taken.

He was visited yesterday by many members of the diplomatic corps, particularly those from South and Central America, who spent some time at his residence. Mr. Bryan has made no definite plans for the future beyond those indicated. He will not remain in Washington throughout the summer, but probably will not depart before the first of July.

# The Nation First

[Pittsburg Leader, June 10, 1915.]

All the force of the views thrown against William Jennings Bryan for quitting the Wilson cabinet in a crisis can not affect the value of the late secretary's attitude on the causes of his retirement.

Mr. Bryan was right in acting as he did. This is not to say that President Wilson is wrong, for Mr. Bryan may be wrong in believing that the Wilson note will force us into war with Germany.

But whether Mr. Bryan is correct on that point or not, he was right in leaving a post where his duties conflicted with his sense of right and justice and his conscience. His latest statement is evidence that he had excellent grounds for declaring that another course lay wide open before the president over which he could travel in perfect safety and accomplish the same results.

Mr. Bryan gives the two points which forced his retirement when the president refused to accept their application to the situation with Germany. One covers the complete investigation of the Lusitania disaster by an international commission. The other insists there should be a warning to Americans against traveling on belligerent nation vessels, or with cargoes of ammunition.

Mr. Bryan's position on these points is the correct one. No American who really considers the interests of his native land should refuse to forego personal privileges when his acts may involve his country in war.

The American citizen, as President Wilson says, may have the constitutional right to go anywhere, at any

time, in perfect safety. This is the technical, legal application.

Mr. Bryan agrees, but adds that on broader grounds than individual right, no American citizen has a moral right to involve his country in war in defense of that citizen's technical rights.

The right of the American nation to remain at peace is greater than the right of the individual citizen—especially when the citizen seeks to make the protection of his right the cause of the overthrow of the peace of all the citizens.

And, as Mr. Bryan points out, he is not a good American citizen who seeks to embroil his country and fellow citizens in war because he feels that his individual rights have been infringed or abridged.

Mr. Bryan grows stronger as he points out that the course he tried to induce President Wilson to follow is that always taken by state, and county, and city officials, in times of sudden and dangerous stress. The executive calls upon all good citizens to refrain from going into danger zones until peace and order are restored. Similar warning to American citizens would remove the danger of involving America with Germany.

Mr. Bryan believes in protecting American citizens quite as firmly as President Wilson, but does not believe that an American citizen has a right to demand reparation for his infringed rights when such reparation would endanger the American nation.

Mr. Bryan says the better way is to warn American citizens that under the circumstances Americans should so act that their legal rights will not be attacked. That no American is justified in insisting that his individual rights, for no other reason of weight or gravity, be protected at the expense of the lives of his fellow citizens and their government.

Mr. Bryan's main point of issue with President Wilson would have covered the entire ground. First he would have had all the questions of fact of the Lusitania case determined by an international commission, to settle whether the queen of the ocean carried guns and ammunition or either.

Second, for President Wilson to warn Americans to not travel by ships of belligerent nations or vessels transporting munitions of war. Then arbitration.

Mr. Bryan's desire to add to the 30 nations with which we are at peace that can not be broken because of treaties that forbid hostile declarations until after international arbitration has failed to adjust questions is one of the largest facts in this situation.

He still believes that if President Wilson should frankly say to Germany that we are willing to apply this principle to existing conditions and those arising from it, that the Berlin government would accept in the same spirit.

This would guard all the rights of Americans and provide the means of escaping war with Germany, all that President Wilson says he desires. But on the broader ground that it is morally wrong for us to insist upon the respect for rights of individual Americans at the expense of the lives of other American citizens, Mr. Bryan looms large.

Mr. Bryan means that he is a poor American citizen who demands that his country take the risk of getting into war because his privileges have been attacked. And especially when American citizens may easily avoid all opportunity for belligerents to make any attack upon their legal rights.

Mr. Bryan may not be America's greatest man, but he is greater today

than before he resigned — for the causes that forced him to act.

## MR BRYAN ON HIS JOB

[From the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 19, 1915.]

Proprietor Oswald G. Villard, who can not by any flight of the imagination be deemed a partial critic, has written for his New York Evening Post some impressions of Mr. Bryan's official character that will serve instructive purposes.

The Mr. Bryan out of office, engaged in toilsome, almost continuous, efforts to get in office, we are all fairly well acquainted with. Of the Mr. Bryan in office, wrestling with the cares of state, we have had, aside from some valueless fulsome eulogy, little but caricatures.

Mr. Villard finds that Mr. Bryan, under practical test, lacks the sophistication of the forceful, effective diplomat. It must not be supposed that that is a deficiency normally dissociated with the makeup of men described as "great commoners." Franklin and Clay were great commoners. So was Gladstone to his fellow Englishmen, though he would hardly be called that in this country.

But while Mr. Villard qualifies almost every statement in which he attributes points of strength to the secretary of state, he does concede that he fills a useful place in the administration, that he is intensely loyal to the president, that he embodies to the plain people, especially those of the middle west, their idea of the attributes that adorn public position and that the popular confidence in the rectitude of his purposes can probably never be shaken. Here are some of the things he says about Mr. Bryan:

"He has the complete respect of all his cabinet associates.

"He is forceful and earnest in the presentation of his views and he has an extraordinary ability to put himself in the other man's place.

"Nor is there the slightest evidence of any selfish desire to make capital for himself or to stay in the limelight.

"He is a powerful and impressive factor in the administration, trying to do his best according to his limitations.

"He is a good American with a far better appreciation of national and international ideals than vast numbers of his critics.

"And above all, he is playing the game fairly and squarely, pulling as steady an oar as possible \* \* \* even though all the credit should go to the captain and none to him."

While we all poke a little fun occasionally at the former Boy Orator of the Platte, it is just as well to recognize the important contributions he has made to the success of the administration. While the phrase is his chief's, his will be recognized as the most powerful influence in his generation making for the "restoration of the government to the people." Even that first battle, mistaken as it was, may yet be looked on as one phase of the long fight against plutocracy, an attack without discretion, but made bravely, on the principle that the enemy was to be assaulted wherever and whenever he showed himself.

Mr. Wilson is the head of the administration, but Mr. Bryan is its heart, and a big, courageous, loyal, responsive heart it is, too, as even Mr. Villard admits.

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