

greater consistency and greater force urge its present contention.

ALSO IN CRIMEAN WAR

"It might be further pointed out that during the Crimean war large quantities of arms and military stores were furnished to Russia by the Prussian manufacturers. During the recent war between Turkey and Italy, this government is advised, arms and ammunition were furnished to the Ottoman government by Germany, and that during the Balkan wars the belligerents were supplied with munitions by both Austria-Hungary and Germany. While these latter cases are not analogous, as in the case of the South African war, to the situation of Austria-Hungary and Germany in the present war, they nevertheless clearly indicate the long established practice of the two empires in the matter of trade in war supplies.

"In view of the foregoing statements, this government is reluctant to believe that the imperial and royal government will ascribe to the United States a lack of imperial neutrality in continuing its legitimate trade in all kinds of supplies used to render the armed forces of all belligerents efficient even though the circumstances of the present war prevent Austria-Hungary from obtaining such supplies from the markets of the United States, which have been and remain, so far as the action and publicity of this government are concerned, open to all belligerents alike.

WOULD ASK SAME RIGHT

"But, in addition to the question of principle, there is a practical and substantial reason why the government of the United States has from the foundation of the republic to the present time advocated and practiced unrestricted trade in arms and military supplies. It has never been the policy of this country to maintain in time of peace a large military establishment or stores of arms and ammunition sufficient to repel invasion by a well equipped and powerful enemy. It has desired to remain at peace with all nations and avoid any appearance of menacing such peace by the threat of its armies and navies. In consequence of this standing policy, the United States would in the event of attack by a foreign power be from the outset of the war, seriously, if not fatally embarrassed by lack of arms and ammunition and by the means to produce them in sufficient quantities to supply the requirements of national defense. The United States has always depended upon the right and power to purchase arms and ammunition from neutral nations in case of foreign attack. The right which it claims for itself it can not deny to others.

"A nation whose principle and policy it is to rely upon international obligations and international justice to preserve its political and territorial integrity might become the prey of an aggressive nation whose policy and practice it is to increase its military strength during times of peace with the design of conquest, unless the nation can, after war has been declared, go into the markets of the world and purchase the means to defend itself against the aggressor.

WOULD HAVE TO PREPARE

"The general adoption by the nations of the world of the theory that neutral powers ought to prohibit the sale of arms and ammunition to belligerents would compel every nation to have in readiness at all times sufficient munitions of war to meet any emergency which might arise and to erect and maintain establishments for the manufacture of arms and ammunition sufficient to supply the needs of its military and naval forces throughout the progress of a war.

"Manifestly the application of this theory would result in every nation becoming an armed camp, ready to resist aggression and tempted to employ force in resisting its rights rather than appeal to reason and justice for the settlement of international disputes.

"Perceiving, as it does, that the adoption of the principle that it is the duty of a neutral to prohibit the sale of arms and ammunition to a belligerent during the progress of a war, would inevitably give the advantage to the belligerent which had encouraged the manufacture of munitions in time of peace, and which had laid in vast stores of arms and ammunition in anticipation of war, the government of the United States is convinced that the adoption of the theory would force militarism on the world and work against that universal peace which is desired and purposed of all nations which exalt justice and righteousness in their relations with one another.

NO OPINION ON WAR

"The government of the United States in the foregoing discussion of the practical reason why

it has advocated and practiced trade in munitions of war, wishes to be understood as speaking with no thought of expressing or implying any judgment with regard to the circumstances of the present war, but as merely putting very frankly the argument in this matter, which has been conclusive in determining the policy of the United States.

"While the practice of nations, so well illustrated by the practice of Austria-Hungary and Germany during the South African war and the manifest evil which would result from a change of that practice, render compliance with the suggestions of the imperial and royal government out of the question. Certain assertions appearing in the Austro-Hungarian statement as grounds for its contentions can not be passed over without comment. These assertions are substantially as follows:

"1. That the exportation of arms and ammunition from the United States to belligerents contravenes the preamble of The Hague convention No. 13 of 1907;

"2. That it is inconsistent with the refusal of this government to allow delivery of supplies to vessels of war on the high seas;

"3. That, according to all authorities on international law who concern themselves more properly with the question, 'exportation should be prevented when this traffic assumes such a form or such dimensions that the neutrality of a nation becomes involved thereby.'

REFERENCE TO PREAMBLE

"As to the assertion that the exportation of arms and ammunition contravenes the preamble of The Hague convention No. 13, of 1907, the government presumes that reference is made to the last paragraph of the preamble, which is as follows:

"Seeing that in this category of reasons, these rules should not in principles be now altered in times of war by a neutral power except when purchase has shown the necessity for such change for the protection of the rights of that power."

"Manifestly the only ground to change the rules laid down by the convention, one of which it should be noted, explicitly declares that a neutral is not bound to prohibit the exportation of contraband of war, is the necessity of a neutral power to do so in order to protect its own rights. The right and duty to determine when this necessity exists rests with the neutral, not with a belligerent. It is discretionary, not mandatory. If a neutral power does not avail itself of the right, a belligerent is not privileged to complain, for in doing so it would be in the position of declaring to the neutral power what is necessary to protect that power's own rights. The imperial and royal government can not but perceive that a complaint of this nature would invite just rebuke.

AS TO INCONSISTENCY

"With reference to the asserted inconsistency of the course adopted by this government in reference to the exportation of arms and ammunition and that followed in not allowing supplies to be taken from its ports to ships of war on the high seas, it is only necessary to point out that the prohibition of supplies to ships of war rests upon the principle that a neutral power must not permit its territory to become a naval base for either belligerent. A warship may, under certain restrictions, obtain fuel and supplies in a neutral port—once in three months. To permit merchant vessels acting as tenders to carry supplies more often than three months and in unlimited amount would defeat the purpose of the rule and might constitute the neutral territory as naval base. Furthermore, this government is unaware that any Austro-Hungarian ship of war has sought to obtain supplies from a port in the United States, either directly or indirectly. This subject has, however, already been discussed with the imperial German government, to which the position of this government was fully set forth December 24, 1914.

HAS BEEN MISLED

"In view of the positive assertion in the statement of the imperial and royal government as to the unanimity of the opinions of text writers as to the exportation of contraband being unneutral, this government has caused a careful examination of the principal authorities on international law to be made. As a result of this examination it has come to the conclusion that the imperial and royal government has been misled and has inadvertently made an erroneous assertion. Less than one-fifth of the authorities consulted advocate unreservedly the prohibition of the export of contraband. Several of those

who constitute this minority admit that the practice of nations has been otherwise. It may not be inopportune to direct particular attention to the German authority, Paul Einicke, who states that at the beginning of a war belligerents have never remonstrated against the enactment of prohibitions on trade in contraband, but adds:

"Such prohibition may be considered violations of neutrality, or, at least, as unfriendly acts, if they are enacted during a war with the purpose to close unexpectedly the sources of supply to a party which heretofore had relied upon them."

"The government of the United States deems it unnecessary to extend further at the present time a consideration of the statement of the Austro-Hungarian government. The principles of international law, the practice of nations, the national safety of the United States and other nations without great military and naval establishments, the prevention of increased armies and navies, the adoption of peaceful methods for the adjustment of international differences, and, finally, neutrality itself, are opposed to the prohibition by a neutral nation of the exportation of arms, ammunition or other munitions of war to belligerent powers during the progress of the war.

(Signed)

"LANSING."

The Political Situation

[Interview given Portland, Oregon, papers.]

Q. "What do you think of the political situation next year, Mr. Bryan?"

A. "No one," replied Mr. Bryan, "can speak with any certainty in regard to the campaign of 1916. It is difficult to look ahead a year in ordinary times and these are not ordinary times. It is just a year ago that the war broke out in Europe, and if we look back over last year and note the problems which have been forced upon us, we can understand how impossible it is to calculate political conditions a year hence. If we were dealing with domestic questions alone we might reasonably rely for our hope of success in 1916 upon the manner in which the president, with the aid of a democratic senate and a democratic house, has dealt with economic questions—the tariff question, the currency question and the trust question. In each case democratic principles have been applied. The tariff law, new currency law and anti-trust law deal with these questions from the people's standpoint and in the people's interest, and if the people were free to consider these questions alone we could hardly doubt that a large majority would register a verdict of approval.

"If we turn to international affairs we find that the administration has had to deal with many difficult problems and it has dealt with them successfully. The Mexican question, the Japanese question and the European question, each in its own turn and sometimes all together, have produced acute conditions and the president should be given credit—and I have no doubt will be given credit—for having so dealt with them as to avoid war. What the future will develop no one can foresee, but the democratic party has earned the confidence of the people and a democrat, therefore, has reason to expect a democratic victory in 1916."

Q. "Will you be a candidate for the democratic nomination for president next year, Mr. Bryan?"

A. "I have no political expectations whatever and no plans looking to the holding of any office in the future. The work which I have mapped out for my remaining years does not include the occupying of any political position. This answer covers every contingency and ought to be satisfactory to all classes except one. There is one class in this country that has insisted that I should promise never under any circumstances to be a candidate for anything. I have never felt that it was necessary to gratify this class by making a promise of that kind, and I do not think it necessary to make that kind of a promise now. Friends will be satisfied to know my plans, and it is not necessary that I should undertake the hopeless task of pleasing those who count themselves among the politically unfriendly. It is enough for those who are unfriendly to know that I shall remain in politics for the rest of my life and that it will be my purpose hereafter, as it has been heretofore, to advocate that which I believe to be good for the masses of the people and to expose and oppose the

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