

To Investigate Ocean Freight Rates

Following is a statement issued from Washington, D. C., August 16, 1915:

At the request of the president, the interstate commerce commission will make a thorough and extensive investigation of ocean transportation facilities and rates between the United States and foreign countries. The treasury department and the department of commerce will co-operate with the commission in making the inquiry which will develop the actual situation regarding ocean transportation at the present time and its effects upon American foreign trade.

The investigation will cover all phases of our ocean commerce with particular reference to the trade with South and Central America and the principal countries of Europe. The commission will ascertain, through reliable and impartial sources, what kind of steamship service exists between our leading ports and the leading ports of South and Central America and those of Europe and how it compares with the service as it existed before the European war broke out; what were the rates for passengers and cargo prior to the outbreak of the war, and since; and what is the effect of present shipping conditions upon our foreign commerce.

This investigation will be undertaken at once so that the commission may be able to report to the president before the next session of congress convenes. In order that the commission may get a true perspective of the situation, it will be extremely helpful and will greatly expedite the investigation if shippers throughout the country will write the commission immediately, giving the fullest possible information about existing conditions and how their trade has been affected by the scarcity of steamship tonnage, the extent of the increase in freight rates and the effect of these rates upon their business. It is most desirable that shippers avail of this opportunity to enlighten the commission in the beginning so that the inquiry may be pursued through all other channels as quickly as it is possible to do so, and at the same time make the investigation complete and thorough.

The investigation was suggested to the president by Secretary McAdoo, who presided at the Pan-American Financial conference, recently held in Washington, and which unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this conference that improved ocean transportation facilities between the countries composing the Pan-American Union have become a vital and imperative necessity, and that every effort should be made to secure at the earliest possible moment such improved means of ocean transportation, since it is of primary importance to the extensions of trade and commerce and improved financial relations between the American republics."

The secretary pointed out that the question of ocean transportation became, wholly unexpectedly, one of the most important, if not the most important, before the conference. Some of the foreign delegates expressed themselves as seeing little hope for any great expansion of our trade and financial relations with Latin America unless ample steamship facilities are promptly provided.

As one of the results of the Pan-American Financial conference the secretary of the treasury already has set in motion certain agencies in South and Central America through which it is hoped to obtain a large amount of illuminating information relating to the problem of ocean transportation between those countries and the United States. He has asked each country for detailed information regarding present facilities and rates and the needs of the situation to build up trade between the United States and Latin America. This data will be furnished the commission as soon as received for use in connection with its investigation.

Ocean steamship facilities are of primary importance to the business men and producers of the United States, and it will be the aim of the commission to develop all the facts and conditions of the situation for the information of the president, of congress and of the country.

The commission is clothed with authority to conduct this investigation under section 21 of the act to regulate commerce, which requires it, among other things, to make a report of such information and data "as may be considered of

value in the determination of questions connected with the regulation of commerce." In addition, the Panama canal act has very greatly enlarged the power and duties of the commission with respect to water line carriers.

MR. BRYAN

Mr. Bryan is a pathfinder in human progress. He is an outpost. He is a trail blazer.

He lives a generation ahead of his time. His vision is so far in advance that his career has been a career of devoted friendships and bitter antagonisms. He flamed forth in the voice of a new radicalism in the Chicago convention in 1896, years later this country has translated into law and is living under many of the advanced ideas that were then resented and repudiated.

It is inherent in him to be with the advance guard. As fast as the main body moves up, he goes forward. He is, in the economic world what Wyckliffe and Savonarola were in the theological world.

He was born a radical, and will always be a radical. In his dreams of universal peace, he is in the far-flung front, holding the beacon aloft. He is finding the path. He is lighting the way.

His peace views may not be practical at this juncture in the history the world is writing. In America, we could not dare, in the present mood of the nations, to accept the peace era as here, and lay down our means of defense. But, if man is going on moving up in civilization, the peace Mr. Bryan's visions is what the world is headed for. If we have faith in man's intelligence, we must expect to come some time, not to what the militarists clamor for, but to what Mr. Bryan is appealing for. When this cruel war is over and the appalling wreckage is once visioned through the smoke of conflict, the peace era may be hastened.

There may be question about the advisability of an aggressive position by Mr. Bryan as to world peace at this critical moment. He was recently a member of the cabinet. He resigned because he did not approve an American note. The peculiar circumstances make it possible for his peace position to be misconstrued.

It can be misunderstood by the German government and by the German people. It can be misunderstood by the German press in America. It can be misunderstood by Mr. Bryan's own best friends.

It can give the impression abroad that America is a divided nation. It can be misconstrued as indicating that President Wilson in his representations with European chancelleries has not the full accord and support of his country. To his own career, to the country and to his place in history, is due from Mr. Bryan a course that will suffer no man, no people, no nation to have other view than that the president is supported, sustained and fully upheld by a united country in all the eventuations to come out of the great part he is forced to play in the staggering complexities and complications in a war-maddened world. The present is the most critical moment of Mr. Bryan's career.

If Mr. Bryan had contributed nothing else to human welfare, the 30 arbitration treaties between the United States and other nations should give him a high place in human history. They are a beginning in the advance toward reason. In the end, this war will be settled by negotiations and discussion at the peace conference. The Bryan treaties provide for the negotiations before hostilities are declared instead of waiting until a continent is crimsoned with blood.

The personal power of Mr. Bryan is one of the remarkable episodes of American history. He exercised undoubted leadership over his party from 1896 until the election of Woodrow Wilson. He was the youngest man ever nominated for the presidency, and the only presidential candidate ever nominated by a great party from west of the Mississippi.

He sustained defeat and was renominated at the succeeding election. Yet his power with his party was so great that, after a second defeat he was a third time nominated.

For 20 years Mr. Bryan has formulated policies one after another, which, whether accepted or rejected have become for the time paramount issues. No other man in the history of the republic, not even Clay with a personal power resembling that of Mr. Bryan, has so nearly fixed the field upon which the people of a great nation were to debate and conduct their political campaigns.

A national party convention in the United States is an arena in which the force and power of men are measured. By the force of his per-

sonality, wholly without reputation, and while only a political writer on a Nebraska newspaper, Mr. Bryan swept such a convention off its feet and compelled his own nomination at Chicago in 1896. No duplicate of the achievement is on record.

In such a convention, in a political battle never approximated in America, Mr. Bryan forced the nomination of Woodrow Wilson in 1912. No convention ever equalled it in dramatic scenes. The events at Baltimore will stand for all time conspicuous among historic conventions. Never before did a political leader go into a hostile convention of his party and, by daring strategy and tenacious purpose, subdue it and compel it to accept his guidance. Nor is it likely that any leader will ever again be able to perform a political feat so nearly bordering on the marvelous. The fruit of his work there is Woodrow Wilson as president and the translation of many great progressive policies into law.

There are many who disagree with Mr. Bryan, but the time is long past when any thoughtful citizen will deny him a place among the foremost citizens of the world.—Portland (Oregon) Journal.

THEY'RE ALL FOR PEACE

Napoleon, commenting at St. Helena on the benevolent enterprise in which he expended two or three hundred thousand lives, said:

"The war with Russia ought to have been the most popular war of modern times. It was on the side of good sense and sound interests of the peace and security of Europe. It was purely pacificatory and conservative. . . . In this way Europe would soon have been but one people; and every one, travel where he might, would have still been in the common fatherland. I should have insisted on all the navigable rivers being free to all, on common rights in all seas, and on the great standing armies being reduced merely to an efficient guard for the various sovereigns. . . . Then my leisure and old age would have been dedicated to making a tour with the empress, driving our own horses and taking our time like a country couple, visiting all the nooks of Europe."

They all want peace; but some of them would achieve it by most extraordinary methods.—Saturday Evening Post.

The brewers were sadly foiled in their effort to make it appear that President Wilson was unutterably opposed to prohibition. They succeeded, in their effort to get an elucidation of the Shannon and Grogan letters, only in securing a direct statement from the chief executive that he could easily conceive of conditions where statewide prohibition was both necessary and desirable. In Nebraska the liquor interests have succeeded to the command of a political oligarchy the railroads were compelled to abandon and exercise the high and low judgment upon all legislation, as they do in a number of other states. Does anybody doubt what the president would advise to be done in Nebraska if he were aware of the facts?

During the year ended June 30th last, the export trade of the United States totaled 26 per cent more than that of Great Britain, the nation that has for centuries lead in this field of commercial ventures. And yet there are manufacturers and economists and politicians so blind to the best interests of the nation industrially as to believe that this leadership ought to be sacrificed on the altar of greed built out of the high tariffs of the past.

The New York World, which has been a consistent defender of the railroads, steps forward to declare that the talk of ruin heard from them every time any new or proposed law is challenged is being overworked. It says: "They have been saved from ruin by the rate increase decision and again by the inter-mountain rate decision, but ruin still runs riot. It is time to retire the ruin argument." Frankness in one's friends is not always a lovely virtue.

The east is gradually getting over its fright, but its newspapers are still clamoring for a very much larger army and navy. The editors are insisting that we are at the mercy of any European nation that desires to attack us, neglecting to remark in the same connection that there is no European nation but that has had all the war just now that is people will stand for.