

The Commoner

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THE PEOPLE VS. THE SPECIAL INTERESTS

To the Readers of The Commoner:

Another fight is on between the people and the special interests, and the democratic party is the only party in position to take the people's side. Ex-President Roosevelt is bellowing for war. He wants this nation to enter the present conflict, and his chief adviser, Geo. W. Perkins, is identified with the steel trust which is ready to furnish the preparedness. Ex-President Taft, who has the support of all the trusts that are not supporting Mr. Roosevelt, wants to increase the army and navy appropriations one hundred and fifty millions (60 per cent) so that we shall be able to join Europe in future wars—that is the plan of his "League to ENFORCE Peace."

Both Roosevelt and Taft are protectionists—they believe in taxing the many for the benefit of the few, and preparedness gives an excuse for raising the tariff. The democratic party took the side of the people against the tariff barons; it took the side of the people against the trust magnates, and it took the side of the people against Wall street—the real money power back of both tariff barons and trust magnates.

Now, a new power has arisen in the land and demands control of the taxing power. It is the preparers of preparedness—the battleship builders and the manufacturers of munitions. They have been making enormous profits supplying the belligerent nations with fighting material, but the European war must end some time—not as long as these human vultures can keep it going—but SOME TIME; and what will these concerns do for watermelon-like dividends then? There is only one way to insure their continued prosperity—they must lash this country into a state of chronic fear, and then coin the fear into dollars. They already have their subsidized organs setting up a false standard of national honor—the duelist's standard; they are glorifying brute force. They are transplanting upon American soil the European tree of hatred which is bearing its bloody fruit across the Atlantic.

No time is to be lost; immediate action is necessary. Congress will soon meet, and when it meets this issue will confront it. Write to your congressman—write to both your senators.

Tell them that this nation does not need burglars' tools unless it intends to make burglary its business; it should not be a pistol-toting nation unless it is going to adopt pistol-toters' ideas.

Don't let the jingoes confuse the issue. It is not a question of defense—this country will defend itself if it is ever attacked—and if that time ever comes the common people will furnish the soldiers—those who fight when the country needs fighters, and work when the country needs workers—the jingoes will be too busy making army contracts and negotiating usurious war loans to go to the front. The preparedness now demanded will provoke war instead of preventing it. Peace among nations, as among individuals, rests upon friendship and good will, not upon force or fear. Try threats and ultimatums on your neighbors and see how they work, and then you will understand the diplomacy that has reddened the pages of history and delayed the coming of universal brotherhood. Write—and write NOW.

W. J. BRYAN.

A False Philosophy

"Universal peace is possible, but it will come only in the perfection of our civilization and, measuring the progress of the future by what has been accomplished in the past, this ideal state is a million or two years off." This is the concluding sentence of a recent editorial in the Memphis Commercial Appeal, and the sentence quite accurately sets forth the philosophy of the jingo press, of which the Commercial Appeal is a conspicuous representative. It is a complacent philosophy which justifies moral lethargy and invites degeneracy. The doctrine is advanced by those who desire to excuse inaction—"What is the use?" they argue—"The ideal is so far off that we shall not live to see it realized; why then should we concern ourselves about it?" It is the philosophy of those who put their ease above the welfare of the soul. Applied to individual life it would paralyze every lofty purpose, and encourage a return to barbarism.

Unless we apply to the nation the moral code which regulates individual life we have no rules for the control of national groups. The Christian religion is based on the theory that we can "overcome evil with good"—that example is the most potent influence for good. It is now nearly two thousand years since the moral code of Christ was launched upon the world and, although it has always been ridiculed and de-

nounced by those who, like Demetrius, fear that it will interfere with their business of idol-making, still it has grown, is growing, and will grow. It is the Christian's duty to do right as he sees it, without asking whether the millennium is near or far off—no one is wise enough to know when our civilization will be perfected, but every one who has learned how to think knows that it will be hastened most when each one does all he can to support the right and suppress the wrong.

So with nations. We can not tell what our nation can do until it tries. This may be the

time of triumph; it is at least the time to TRY; and every citizen who desires universal peace should by word and deed aid in the spread of the doctrine of peace, and in the opposition of any thing that will delay it. W. J. BRYAN.

THE COLUMBIA TREATY

When the senate convenes the Columbia treaty will again come up for consideration, and it is to be hoped that it will be ratified without delay. It is the last thing necessary to the perfecting of our relations with Spanish America. Having refused to arbitrate our differences with Columbia we are in duty bound to propose an adjustment that will restore cordiality and good will. The increased democratic majority in the senate ought to enable the president to secure the ratification of this treaty at once. Then Columbia, the last of the South American countries, can be added to the thirty peace treaty nations. W. J. BRYAN.

THE NICARAGUA TREATY

The Nicaragua treaty will be laid before the senate when it again convenes, and will without doubt be ratified. It would have been ratified at the last session if a vote could have been reached. The sum of three millions, the amount to be paid for the canal option and for the naval base at Fonseca Bay, is a very reasonable compensation for the rights secured, and it will be a great advantage to Nicaragua to have the United States interested in her tranquility. W. J. BRYAN.

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