

People Opposed to Policy of "Preparedness"

Extracts from a Few of the Letters Received by Mr. Bryan in Opposition to the Propoganda for Militarism

John T. Little, Olathe, Kansas:
 Enclosed I send you a copy of a letter I am sending to President Wilson. I agree with your policy on the war question. A few months ago I had the pleasure of hearing you lecture at Spokane, Washington, on "The Causeless War," and endorse your stand for peace. I think the President is making a mistake in his stand for a great army and navy, and it will weaken him with the American people. You have always stood by the people in their fight for better things and the time is coming in America when your theory will be commonly accepted by the citizens of this great nation. I am with you in your fight and wish you success.

The letter above mentioned follows:

"Mr. President, Woodrow Wilson—In regard to that which seems to be one of the great questions before the American people just now, is the one of "Preparedness," which contemplates a stupendous appropriation for the purpose of creating and maintaining a great standing army to ward off an imaginary attack on this republic. As a friend, your supporter and a soldier, I wish to say that fifty years have passed since the close of our great Civil war, and our people, while they were apparently estranged from each other by this war, there is not now a single element that lurks within our body politic, that has the slightest tendency to alienate any portion of our people from the other. We are standing together representing the greatest republic on the earth. During this fifty years this country has not conceived the necessity of a great standing army. The great heart of the American people are opposed to it. The soldier element of this country who were engaged in the Civil war are opposed to it. The organization of this great standing army is a menace to this country. When the war now waging on the eastern continent shall close there will not be another war in all Europe in the next five hundred years. This great army and navy which is now sought to be organized in this country against an imaginary foe in the east, will be held over the heads of the great laboring element of this nation as a warning against any contention in which they may engage to hold them in absolute subjection. There has already grown up in this country and is increasing a mighty corporate power of wealth which will demand the use of this standing army to suppress the lawful demands of the people, and Mr. President, this is the element that is demanding this standing army. The people of this nation are opposed to this great standing army. It will be an element before the people in the next political campaign, and the party which seeks to strengthen its cause under this cowardly demand for a standing army will be swept into the vortex of an inglorious defeat. Respectfully yours, JOHN T. LITTLE, Ex-Atty General of Kansas."

W. N. Hudson, Chanute, Kan.: I join the millions of American patriots who are congratulating you for your firm and unwavering stand for peace. Our President has become the prey of a capitalistic press and he is out of tune with the industrial element of our nation. If we prepare for war we will have war; if we prepare for destruction we will destroy. War recruits come from the masses of our people, the farmer, the miner, the factoryman and the common labor-

ers; they fight the battles and pay the bills. Recruiting offices are not besieged by the class of men who composed the President's audience at the Manhattan club. They agitate war for profit but they never fight. They are not willing that the acts and deeds of a great nation shall stand four square with righteousness. Those who receive the least from government bear the burden of the jingoes war program. Every minister, who prefers example to force, should register a protest against our President's war policy. We commend you for your efforts in behalf of peace and a higher code of political ethics.

Asa Leroy Carter, Pittsburgh, Pa.: I hope you will get the President and every member of congress to read the last half of the first chapter of "The Eugenic Mother and Baby," by W. Grant Hague, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Hague Publishing Company, New York (1913). No clearer and better prediction of the taking place and results of the European war has ever been written, and no man who reads it will fail to stop and think before he starts our nation into a competitive human life destruction preparation which must inevitably end in revolution or war. My ancestors who have for many generations belonged to the Friends church, have always pointed out a way whereby this terrible sacrifice can be overcome, and I am truly glad to see you come forward and espouse this cause in what I consider an unanswerable argument presented in Saturday's paper.

T. R. Wells, Sauk Centre, Minn.: I endorse every word Mr. Bryan says against the plan of preparedness, as outlined in the President's Chas. F. Murphy speech in New York. Evidently the President is allowing himself to be stampeded by an element that are taking advantage of the situation in Europe to militarize this country. As Mr. Bryan says, there is less reason now for preparedness than sixteen months ago. I believe the rank and file of the party are opposed to any extensive expenditure at this time for military purposes. The place the President chose to launch his campaign for preparedness was

MASS MEETINGS IN PROTEST

Claremore, Okla., Nov. 13, 1915 — Charles W. Bryan, Associate Editor, The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb.: At Oolagah, where I live; at Coweta, Jenks, Talla, Chelsea and Claremore, all in Oklahoma, great mass meetings of citizens are being, and have been held, condemning the whole military program of the administration, and indorsing your honorable brother in his stand against going into the wild jingolism of Europe on this continent. These resolutions have been sent to the Kansas City Star and other papers, and yet not one word has appeared in print about these meetings. The common masses are being absolutely ignored by the steel trust supporting papers. Can you, as a newspaper man, tell me how the citizens can get their protests into print? The local papers speak of these meetings, and publish their findings, but the great dailies will not do so.

This militarism is not a partisan question, and there have been thousands of democrats, republicans and socialists in these meetings who joined in one voice condemning the attitude of Mr. Wilson, and fully sustaining W. J. Bryan in his contention; but we are all ignored by the trust owned dailies. How can we reach the public ear?

I am yours for non-militarism,
 WILLIAM MADISON HICKS.
 Oolagah, Okla., Box 27.

very appropriate for the occasion, because the whole scheme is born of iniquity. Mr. Wilson courts the favor of Tammany, an element that Mr. Bryan had to defeat at Baltimore if a progressive was to secure the nomination, and a platform suitable to the needs and requirements of the people was to be adapted. I am going to do what I can to defeat the plan.

Guy Johnson, Ogden, Utah: I most heartily approve of your opposition to the President's declaration on the subject of preparedness. I was certain the country would hear from you as soon as I read Mr. Wilson's Manhattan club speech. I also think your interpretation of the influence of the Manhattan club is absolutely correct.

D. E. McDowell, Joplin, Mo.: I am writing to approve your course relative to "preparedness" for war. You never did need any encouragement to do right, but a little encouragement will do no harm. I have been your follower since 1896, and am still. You are the only statesman in America since the formation of our government who has been right all the time. You are "righter" now than ever before. Propose in your next statement that the President send a special message to congress advocating the repeal of the law limiting the age of those who go to war to 45 years. Take off the limit. Let every one go. Let him propose that those in favor of an increased "preparedness" sign an agreement to go to war in the event of it. Let these signatures be on file in Washington, and when war comes, let these signers be the first to go; also let these signers be the ones to make up the "continental army."

W. C. Rogers, Kansas City, Mo.: I thank you for the firm stand you have taken for peace. The cornerstone of our republic was not laid in blood; its strength and greatness not attained by appeal to the sword. Now we are appealing to the sword—now imitating nations of Europe, and now departing from the counsel of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, etc. Cry aloud and spare not, only continue

your noble bearing toward an honest president, who has been deceived by jingoes and the interests. Publish your views in The Commoner, and send broadcast to the people. Pardon these suggestions from an ardent friend and supporter.

O. E. Mitchell, Logansport, Ind.: I want to commend Mr. Bryan for the honorable stand he takes for peace, and I trust there is enough patriotism in the American manhood to rally to his call and help to carry out his policies, for I believe them to be sincere and righteous. With some degree of amusement I read Mr. Wilson's Scriptural references in support of his policies of preparedness, Ezekiel 33: 1-6. I am almost persuaded that policies founded on principles laid down in the New Testament by the Prince of Peace himself, would be a much safer plan. Are we living under the old dispensation, the Mosaic law? Or is there not something better to set up before the world as the American way, the American spirit? Do we hope to gain the confidence and friendship of the world by preparing to fight them? Are we to follow the example of kingdoms and monarchies who have risen only to fall through the policies of militarism—preparedness? Strong nations, yea, the strongest military nations the world has ever known, have been overcome and gone down into ashes, even without exception. The policy has proven a failure. Then why should we, the most favored people on God's footstool, follow in the path that surely leads to destruction?

Sterling P. Strong, Dallas, Texas: I write to endorse all you said in reply to the President's speech, delivered before the Manhattan club in New York. One trouble with members of the Manhattan club and other advisers of the President, in that part of the United States, they know more about Europe than they do of their own country. If the President will get more of the sentiment of the taxpayers and pay less attention to the tax-eaters, he will be in better position to speak on preparedness. I am sure our President is acting earnestly and honestly, but his policy will breed hate instead of love, and trouble instead of peace. My earnest prayer is that the Lord will spare you many years, and sustain you with strength, wisdom and courage to stand as you have in the past, for the teachings of the Man of Galilee. As rapidly as the people see the truth, just that sure will they endorse your teachings.

Elmer Ellsworth Reed, Leslie, Mich.: Your position on armaments is fully endorsed by at least 300,000 men who sell goods on the road for a livelihood.

G. A. Nystrom, Calmar, Ia.: I write to tell you that I for one (and nearly everybody in this place for that matter) am with you in your fight against "preparedness," which is nothing but the first step to militarism. Don't spare the "jingoes," strip the movement of the fair sounding names of "Patriotism," "Love of home and Country," etc., under which it is like a wolf in sheep's clothing, presented to us; go to the bottom of its origin and let the people have a guess at the real motives; they are not all fools. I thought it would not hurt you to know that you have the approval of some, yes, in my humble opinion, of