

Congressman Bailey's Logic

[The following speech, delivered in congress January 20 by Hon. W. W. Bailey, member from Johnstown, Pa., deserves to be read by every voter. It is unanswerable.]

Mr. Bailey. Mr. Chairman, at the very outset of what it is hoped may not prove a wholly unprofitable discussion of a momentous and vital question, which has been suddenly and, I believe, unwarrantably thrust upon the American people regarding the national defenses and the need of increasing them at huge expense and practically without limit, it is my desire to call the attention of this house and the attention of the country to the fact that since 1905 the United States has spent upon the army no less than \$1,071,515,401.68 and on the navy the staggering total of \$1,474,686,315.49. The grand total is more than two and a third billions. Yet we are told by the advocates of increased appropriations for army and navy that the country today is "utterly defenseless" and that it could not "for a day" resist the approaches of a foreign foe.

PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DECEIVED

That the people of the country have been considerably alarmed by the false stories given wide currency in support of the jingo program can not be doubted. They have been plied with misinformation. They have been deliberately and most cruelly deceived by those who design thus to stampede them into compliance with the great plans which call for heavy and ever heavier drafts upon the substance of the toilers. They have been worked upon in the name of patriotism until in many instances they appear ready to do the bidding of that interest which is already reckoning its stock-exchange profits out of the moneys congress is expected to appropriate for increased armament.

But, Mr. Chairman, there are multiplying evidences that the propaganda of deceit and misinformation was begun too early. The plain folks out in the country have been given time to think and to inquire. They have been afforded an opportunity to examine some of the facts—not all of them, by any means, but enough of them to give them some basis for conclusions. Among the facts which they have come to realize is the salient one that we have already been spending money most lavishly on our army and navy—more than two and a third billions in the last 11 years, as before noted. If we are still without defenses, what has been done with the money? If we are still at the mercy of a foreign foe, is there any possible assurance that if expenditures were doubled better results would be secured? If more than two thousand millions of dollars have been devoted to the army and navy and yet these are hopelessly inadequate in the hour of possible need, have not those who have supplied the money out of their labor and their self-denial a right to demand that before another penny shall be tossed into this ravening maw some accounting must be made of all that has gone before?

How many people six months ago knew that our navy is the second most powerful afloat? Our metropolitan newspapers and our magazines and our defense leagues studiously befogged the facts. They were careful to keep from view the testimony of our own naval experts within the year. And what was that testimony? It was given before a committee of this house. It was printed in the hearings of that committee. And it tells us that our navy ranks next to that of Great Britain and far ahead of the navies of France, Japan, Russia, Italy, and all other countries in the world. It outranks that of Germany, and today it may not be much inferior to that of England, for no one at this hour can tell what losses have been sustained by the British fleet. We know that these losses must have been heavy. We know that an inflexible censorship has been maintained by the admiralty. We know that the German submarines have levied a terrible toll upon British merchantmen. Can it be that only these have paid the price? Can it be doubted that the fighting machines also have paid?

And if the British fleet has suffered, how has it been with the fleet of Germany? Has it gone scot free? Has it sustained no losses? Has it come through the terrible ordeal thus far unscathed? Who will believe that it has? Who will

accept the hysterical notion that Germany is today stronger upon the sea than she was a year ago, when Admiral Fletcher and other naval experts told a committee of this house that our naval establishment was stronger than that of the Kaiser's?

I shall not undertake to deal with this subject, as I know it will be dealt with by the courageous and invincible leader of the majority on this floor. The gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. Kitchin] has left the Navy League of the United States without a leg to stand on in its attempt to rush the people of the United States into a mad rivalry with Europe in military and naval expansion. He has met every argument advanced by the league with irrefutable facts. He has exposed the duplicity of those who have sought to throw dust in the eyes of the American people. He has pilloried those who would commit the United States to the supreme folly of arming for an imaginary conflict, for a conflict which can only come on our own invitation and by our own devices. Too much honor can not be done this brave leader, this honest American legislator, this splendid citizen who has dared to stand up and challenge all the forces of privilege in the republic and to confront them with the only weapon of which they are afraid—the weapon of truth.

I pay my humble tribute to this gallant leader, to this resourceful friend of the people, to this strong champion of genuine Americanism, to this man of the hour who stands between the toilers of the republic and those who would saddle fresh burdens upon them. (Applause.) It is to him that the masses are turning in this crucial moment. They are learning to know him, to trust him, and to love him. He towers high above the sordid crew which is clamoring for millions and more billions to carry Bethlehem Steel, Crucible Steel, Du Pont Powder, and all the rest of the "war brides" to new high levels on Wall street. And I have the same confidence in him that I have in the cause which he has so splendidly adopted as his own; and as I believe that cause must ultimately triumph over the war traffickers whose propaganda has been sweeping across the continent, so I believe that the American people will stand by Claude Kitchin and vindicate the intrepid course which he has so wisely chosen.

TEMPER OF PEOPLE NOT FOR WAR

Mr. Chairman, let no one on this floor deceive himself. The temper of the people of this country is not for war, nor is it for the things which make for war. And who can doubt that warships and standing armies do this very thing? Was it some mollycoddle, some little American, some pro-German, some coward and craven who said that "overgrown military establishments, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty and are to be regarded as peculiarly hostile to republican liberty"? No; it was the father of his country who so expressed himself long ago. And George Washington was at least as good an American and as brave a man as the tempestuous and explosive hero of San Juan Hill. He was at least as true a patriot as those officials of the Armor trust and the munitions ring who are now engaged, through various defense organizations, in manufacturing sentiment in favor of a standing army on American soil and of a navy great enough to overawe the world. (Applause.)

Mr. Callaway. Mr. Chairman—

The Chairman. Does the gentleman from Pennsylvania yield to the gentleman from Texas?

Mr. Bailey. Yes.

Mr. Callaway. Did you ever hear of a man of real courage wanting to run a bluff on anybody?

Mr. Bailey. I never did, sir.

Mr. Callaway. Do you not believe that nations are just made up of individuals, and that a nation that had an iron down its back and had the right kind of courage would not want to overawe the people or want to bluff them?

Mr. Bailey. Not any more than John L. Sullivan would want to overawe a little boy.

Of course, Mr. Chairman, the pretense is made by these evangelists of peace at any price—and it is your jingo who alone is entitled to be known as a peace-at-any-price man—that the army and the navy are wanted purely for defensive purposes. But is not the pretense altogether too bald? Does it deceive anybody? Can any discerning eye fail to perceive what lies be-

hind? The organ of the Navy League of the United States in an unguarded moment gave the whole case away. It stated with blunt frankness that the army and navy are wanted not for defense but for aggression, for commercial adventure, for the conquest of markets, for world supremacy, for empire. And ignorance is responsible for this folly of follies. Were the plutocrats who constitute the guiding forces of the Navy League of the United States and its allies less blind than they are regarding economic truth they would understand that it is necessary only to win their confidence, to invite and earn their trust, to meet their wants and supply their needs, and to offer them a fair equivalent for whatever value or advantage they may have to confer. The United States might annex the whole earth in a commercial sense were it to open all its markets to the world as freely as the markets of New York and Chicago are open to all the people of the 48 states. More than half the jealousies and suspicions which separate the peoples of the globe today grow out of the superstition that trade is war, and that in order to gain markets we must conquer the country in which the markets are found.

ANOTHER PHASE OF "PREPAREDNESS"

Let me turn for a moment to the consideration of another phase of the general question of military preparedness. We are told that we must have an army of 2,000,000 men. Well, accepting this at face value for the time being, let us consider whether we can get it. Are the young men of America ready to make up this huge army? They have not been overready to make up the army we now have. With the utmost exertion and only with the most flamboyant and deceptive advertisements is it possible to keep the present force recruited. Nearly one-fifth of the men who enlist become deserters, and in becoming deserters have a price set upon their heads. During recent years nearly 50,000 men have deserted from the regular army of the United States. These men have become criminals in consequence. They have sacrificed their citizenship. They have fixed upon themselves by their desertion an ineffaceable stigma.

May we reasonably hope for a better state of affairs when we shall multiply our standing army by 20, raising it from 100,000 men to 2,000,000? Will the causes of desertion be diminished in inverse proportion? Shall we turn out fewer criminals than are now being milled from that mint? Are we to resort to fewer and less gross deceits in enticing the youth of the land to give up gainful employment and the life of home and family and widening interests for the purpose of wearing a uniform and carrying a gun? Or is the alternative to be that which is already being gravely urged—that of enforced military service? If we can not now recruit our army fast enough to make up for desertions, how can it be possible to keep the ranks of a larger force filled unless we adopt the military systems of the Old World?

It can not be done. And the advocates of a huge standing army recognize the fact when they begin to couple with their demand a suggestion of compulsory military service. They are guilty of no self-deception. They know that if the army of which they dream is to be recruited it must be under compulsion. No country in all the tide of time has maintained a great standing army by other means. The youth of no land the sun ever shone upon were willing freely to give up the best years of their lives to military service, which meant nothing but hardship to themselves and perhaps enslavement for their country. Always and everywhere the ruling class have been compelled to resort to compulsion when they felt it necessary to buttress their power with a standing army. And the ruling class in this country are not blinking the fact. They are meeting it fairly and are making no concealment of their plan to graft upon America a system which was the destruction of every free government of the past and that is the accepted instrument of every tyrant who now cumbers this old earth.

NEW PROPOSALS NOT FINAL

I want to ask my countrymen whether they are prepared to follow along this dangerous path. I want to ask them whether they are ready to sign the death warrant of free government in this republic. I want to ask them whether they are themselves to rule or whether they are bent upon turning our institutions over to a class which feels even thus early the spur of necessity pricking it on to courses which the ruling classes of all history have pursued. Let no one tell himself that the proposals now before the country are final. They are only the