

# THE NEBRASKA CAMPAIGN

## Mr. Bryan Defines the Issues

[Abstract of speech delivered by Mr. Bryan in March and April, 1916, during the primary campaign in Nebraska.]

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I ask your attention first to the national phase of this campaign, but will devote the large part of my time to the prohibition question, which is the dominating issue in this state.

The voters of Nebraska will, at the primary election on the eighteenth of April select delegates to the national conventions, four delegates at large and two in each congressional district.

I am a candidate for delegate at large, my name appearing on the ticket with Hon. W. H. Thompson of Grand Island, chairman of our state committee; Judge J. J. Thomas of Seward and L. J. Piatti of Omaha.

There is no reason at this time to discuss national issues and I would not refer to them but for the fact that a group of democrats, led by Senator Hitchcock, is attempting to defeat our ticket.

Senator Hitchcock and his associates claim the guardianship of the interests of the President, but I would remind you of the fact that they were not friends of the President in 1912.

When the progressive democrats of Nebraska were divided between Mr. Wilson and Mr. Clark four years ago, Senator Hitchcock headed the forces that supported Mr. Harmon, the Wall street candidate.

If you will inspect the senator's record you will find that while he is supporting the President in the primary now, when he has no opposition and does not need him, he has opposed the President at critical times, when he was needed; once when he joined Wall street in an attempt to defeat the currency bill and once when he joined the shipping combine in defeating the President's shipping bill.

I believe that the only reason Senator Hitchcock is for the President now is because he desires to aid the liquor interests ride into office on the back of the President.

It is fortunate that the democrats of Nebraska have a candidate other than Senator Hitchcock to support. Hon. I. J. Dunn is a progressive democrat at all times, and he may be depended upon to represent the state honestly and ably.

The democrats who know Mr. Dunn will prefer him to Mr. Hitchcock, and where democrats know only Mr. Hitchcock they will still prefer Mr. Dunn.

### MANY POINTS OF AGREEMENT

Now a word in regard to the many points of agreement between the President and myself, and the few points upon which we have differed. As a member of his cabinet it was my pleasure to work with him in the passage of the laws which have made this administration conspicuous. It has secured the enactment into law of more important measures than were passed by any previous administration in our history in the same length of time.

First; the tariff law, the best we have had in fifty years. Second; the income tax, which transfers \$100,000,000 of taxes each year from the backs of the poor to the possessors of incomes that range from \$3,000 a year up. This is a great reform and would not have been possible but for the fight that the democratic party has waged for twenty years, and finally won, in favor of this amendment to our constitution. I need hardly remind the democrats of Nebraska that I have been one of the leaders in the fight for this income tax amendment.

Third; the currency law. This law which we now have is the best that the country has ever had. I would, if I had the time, consider some of its important features. While I was helping the President to pass this law, Mr. Hitchcock was opposing him. He introduced a bill which carried out the Wall street idea and provided for the issuance of bank notes, whereas the President's bill provided for the issuance of government notes.

The bill introduced by Senator Hitchcock provided for something like twelve reserve districts

but he abandoned his proposition and supported the Wall street demands for only four reserve districts, as against the President's bill which provided for twelve.

There were also two anti-trust laws passed, and in order that you may know how closely I have been connected with this part of the administration's program, I remind you that the declaration that "a private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable," which was embodied in the President's message on the trust question and also in his speech of acceptance, was taken from the platform of 1912, and that I am responsible for the use of that language in that platform as well as three national platforms previous to that year.

These are the more important domestic measures which it has been my pleasure to aid the President in enacting.

### MEXICAN POLICY AND PEACE TREATIES

As secretary of state I assisted him in dealing with the Mexican situation, and I have agreed with him in everything he has done in regard to the Mexican policy since my resignation. I think he is right in sending a punitive expedition into Mexico to punish those who perpetrated an outrage on an American village, and that he is also right in refusing to favor intervention in Mexico.

While I was secretary of state I negotiated more treaties than any other secretary of state had ever negotiated in the same length of time. Thirty of these treaties were peace treaties which followed a plan that I had advocated for eight years before becoming a member of the cabinet. I laid this plan before the President on the day he asked me to become a member of his cabinet, and secured his endorsement. These peace treaties were signed by nations representing three-fourths of all the people on God's footstool.

I was associated with him in dealing with the questions growing out of the European war until we found ourselves differing so radically that I felt it was only fair to him and to myself to resign.

I did not question his right to decide the policy of the government; I did not question his desire to keep this country from being involved in the European war, or that he was following established precedent, but I believed the time had come to invite the nations of the world to adopt a new diplomacy built upon the spirit of love and brotherhood, instead of resting upon the doctrine of force and fear.

Ever since the sinking of the Lusitania I have believed that this government should refuse to permit American citizens to ride on belligerent ships into zones known to be dangerous. I think that it is as necessary to keep our people off these ships as it is for a mayor to keep the people off the streets during a riot.

Whatever may be the rights of the American people, no American citizen should be permitted to jeopardize his country's safety in time of war merely because he wants to travel on a belligerent ship.

If the matter could be put to a vote I believe that nine-tenths of the American people if not ninety-nine out of every one hundred would say that no American should be permitted to jeopardize the peace of his country during this war merely for his own convenience. With the exception of the question of "Preparedness," which has arisen since I resigned from the cabinet, on no other question have I differed from the President.

In order that you may know that I was not alone in my opposition to the President's plan of a continental army, please remember that a democratic committee in congress rejected the President's plan and substituted therefor a plan so good that the President accepted it, and every democrat in the house voted for it, and also every republican but one.

### AGAINST EXTORTIONATE DEMANDS

I have tried to arouse public opinion against the extortionate demands of the army and navy board, and of eastern munition manufacturers,

that the President might be strengthened to resist them.

That you may know what these demands are, let me remind you that while we are today spending \$100,000,000 a year on the army and \$147,000,000 a year on the navy, or about \$250,000,000 a year on both, ten times what is spent on the department of agriculture each year, the army board is asking for \$319,000,000 and the navy board for \$760,000,000 a year.

The army and navy board together are asking more than one billion dollars a year permanently to prepare for imaginary wars, and before this annual charge begins, they are asking for five hundred millions for the army and one billion and a half for the navy to get them into shape. One billion dollars a year on the army and navy would be more than twice the NET income of all the farmers from all their crops.

I do not believe that the people of Nebraska favor the addition of more than eight hundred million dollars a year to the cost of the army and navy, an amount which in ten years would gridiron this country with macadamized or concrete roads twelve miles apart, north and south, east and west.

Having called your attention to the many points of agreement and to the very few points of disagreement between the President and myself, let me add that in every case where the President has been right the republican leaders have been wrong, and where I think the President has erred, the republican leaders have erred much more than he has.

### THE PROHIBITION AMENDMENT

And now let me invite your attention to the prohibition amendment. I shall divide the remainder of my address into four parts, and speak first on the primary law. Like all other laws there is some difficulty in getting results. Compared with the people in the city, the voters in the country are at a great disadvantage, because of the distance to the polling places. Often the farmer has to drive many miles in order to get to the polls. I believe the farmer ought to be placed on an equality with the city voter, and I have been suggesting that it might be possible to relieve the farmer of his unequal task in casting his ballot by collecting votes in the country as we deliver the mail. If we can carry the mail to the farmer every day, we should be able to collect votes once or twice a year, but this will not be possible before April 18 next, and although it is necessary for the farmer to go to a great deal of trouble to vote, I would urge every farmer to vote. The wet vote in the city will be out in full force, and we will have to offset it with the dry vote in the country.

At the primary election it will be necessary for us to select candidates who, when elected, will enforce the amendment if it carries next fall, as we believe it will. The amendment is not self-enforcing. It must be enforced by laws to be passed by the legislature.

The liquor interests understand this and are now trying to control our legislature, and if they can succeed in controlling either the senate or the house in our state legislature, they will be able to prevent the passage of laws that will put the amendment into effect. Be careful, therefore, to nominate a dry democrat and a dry republican in every senatorial and legislative district.

The governor is the most important state officer to be elected this year. He will not only be responsible for the execution of prohibition laws but will have a great deal to do with the passage of laws necessary to the enforcement of the amendment. When the governor vetoes a measure it requires a two-thirds vote of both houses to pass it over his veto, so that if the liquor interests can elect the governor and one more than one-third of either house they can prevent the passage of prohibition laws. It is important that we nominate a dry candidate for governor in both parties.

The lieutenant governor presides over the senate, and becomes governor in case of death or disability of the governor. Be sure to nominate a dry candidate for this office in both parties. Vote for Edgar Howard for lieutenant governor.

You should remember also that we have to