

## Four Essentials to Peace

The President in his great appeal to the belligerent nations stated four essentials to peace—four stones, so to speak, which will serve as a foundation. "First of all, there must be a peace without victory." This proposition struck the belligerent nations on both sides as an impossibility.

Since the war began they have had the same idea about RESTORING peace that they had about MAINTAINING it before the war began, namely, force, the excitement of fear, or, if you please, terrorism. Each side has felt that IT ALONE could maintain peace in Europe and that it could maintain it only by the exercise of SUPERIOR FORCE. This is a fatal defect in their philosophy, and the President has pierced it to the core with the statement, that there should be a peace without victory.

If the war goes on until one side vanquishes the other, it will be followed by over-confidence, if not arrogance, on the part of the victor, and cultivation of the spirit of revenge on the part of the vanquished. The President well states it, when he says, "It would be accepted in humiliation, under duress, at an intolerable sacrifice, and would leave a sting, a resentment, a bitter memory upon which terms of peace would rest, not permanently, but only as upon quicksand. Only a peace between equals can last."

Second: "The equality of nations upon which peace must be founded, if it is to last, must be an equality of rights."

There is no more reason why a nation should be respected because of its geographical area, its population or its wealth, than that the individual man should be respected because of his size or wealth. If the individual has inalienable rights which it is the duty of his government to protect, so nations have their inalienable rights which it is the duty of other nations to respect.

Third: "And there is a deeper thing involved than even equality of right among organized nations. No peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property."

This is a far-reaching proposition; it relates to the very basis of government. He says that it has been customary to transfer human beings with the land which they occupy. Inanimate matter has thus been placed above living souls. The President has performed a signal service in bringing to the attention of the old world the fundamental doctrine that the people are the source of power.

Fourth: The President concludes, "And the paths of the sea must, alike in law and in fact, be free. The freedom of the seas is the sine qua non of peace, equality, and co-operation." Nearly all the suffering which has come to neutral nations since this war began has come because the world has not yet secured the freedom of the seas.

When duelling was in vogue, the duellers were considerate enough to retire to some quiet place and shoot at each other without injury to others.

War is nothing but duelling between nations and the belligerent nations ought to be considerate enough to retire from the oceans—the highways of the world—and fight out their quarrels without disturbing the lives, the property and the commerce of neutral nations.

If the world will come together on the basis proposed by the President, it will not need any League to Enforce Peace. Peace will come as the natural result of recognition of rights and the adoption of the spirit of co-operation.

W. J. BRYAN.

George W. Perkins seems to be of the opinion that the republican leaders of the old guard persuasion are very selfish and perverse gentlemen. All he asks of them is that they turn over to him and his associates control of the party organization and get out.

### INVITING DISASTER

The blindness of the democratic advocates of preparedness is pathetic—they are inviting disaster, political and national. They are piling up burdens upon the people which can not be carried without increasing the national debt, even after resort to every imaginable device for raising more revenue. They are pouring money into an open sieve; there is no limit to the demands of the militarists. The army and navy are like "the horseleach's two daughters," described by Solomon as "crying give, give."

Every excuse for a scare is gone. It was a manufactured scare and it was manufactured for a purpose, but it is now as impotent to frighten as a group of graveyard terrorists after their white sheets have been snatched from them.

It is time to rebuke the professional soldiers who are setting up their sham standards of honor and trying to put into the hearts of all our boys a desire for murder by wholesale; they are a greater menace to the nation's peace than any of the nations which they libel, and yet they are permitted to insult the volunteer soldier while they ride upon the backs of the taxpayers and goad them with golden spurs. The reaction will come soon; it is criminal folly to commit the party to so indefensible a policy.

W. J. BRYAN.

### PROHIBITION SWEEPS ON

The prohibition wave sweeps on in states and nation. The greatest surprise is Indiana. A strict prohibition bill has passed both houses, the senate vote being 38 to 11 and the house vote 70 to 28. The bill becomes effective, after signing by the governor, on April 2, 1918.

The liquor interests in that state, after controlling the democratic state convention, then voted the republican ticket and thus set the democratic party free from obligation, and a considerable number joined the republicans and put the measure through by a large majority.

The amendment has been submitted in Wyoming and is sure to be submitted in Utah, New Mexico and Florida. In Minnesota the bill has passed one house. Submission is also under consideration in Illinois and Wisconsin.

At the national capital the senate has already passed the bill making the District dry, and it will pass the house before adjournment.

If a vote can be secured on the national amendment it will show a large gain over the vote two years ago, and it is quite sure to be submitted by the next congress. The cause goes from victory on to victory.

### ROOSEVELT VS. TAFT

On another page will be found Mr. Roosevelt's attack on Mr. Taft's league to enforce peace. The Colonel's conclusion is right, but his reasoning is wrong. The fault of Mr. Taft's plan is that it has too much Roosevelt in it. Mr. Taft wants to use FORCE—not as much as Mr. Roosevelt would use, and he would not resort to its use so quickly, but it is force after all upon which he relies.

By the time this war was over the people of the United States will understand the importance of the thirty treaties and also the peril of tying ourselves to the European nations.

### A WORD OF WARNING

The democratic senators and members who are tempted to vote for big military and naval appropriations should remember that its excessive appropriations for preparedness at the last session nearly cost it an election. The party was saved from defeat by the section that favored peace—not preparedness.

Several Iowa republican newspapers are clamoring for the repeal of the new law there which removed the party circle from the ballot. They say that it complicates the ballot too much. A much better remedy would be to strengthen the schools of Iowa that teach how to read.

### WELCOME NORTH DAKOTA

The Commoner welcomes North Dakota into the sisterhood of states admitting women to the privilege of voting for president and municipal officers. Next!

## "Constitutional" Lawyers

This is the season of the year—the legislative period—when the constitutional lawyers—a biennial crop—ripen under the genial sun of the special interests. Men who, at home, were never suspected of superior learning, blossom out into profound students of the constitution, and it sometimes develops that their only reason for aspiring to legislative honors was to keep that sacred document from being shattered by legislation directed against some predatory corporation.

The liquor interests have employed nearly all the constitutional lawyers not previously retained by the railroads, and many of them represent both. Whenever a state law is proposed it is represented as interfering with interstate commerce, and, when federal legislation is proposed, it is objected to on the ground that it violates the rights of the states.

According to the constitutional lawyers all the big corporations live in a twilight zone between the state governments on one side and the federal government on the other—safe from the authority of both.

But the constitutional lawyers received a rude jolt recently. When the Webb-Kenyon law was passed all the constitutional lawyers (from wet territory) opposed it. Even the president, claiming brewery ridden Cincinnati for his home, interposed his veto on the advice of his attorney general, who hailed from New York.

Congress passed the bill, however, over the president's veto, amid the lamentations of the constitutional lawyers, who wept aloud and in concert for the fall of the republic. And now the supreme court has, by a vote of 7 to 2, declared the Webb-Kenyon law constitutional, the decision being delivered by the chief justice and concurred in by all the democratic members of the court! But the constitutional lawyers, instead of being happy that the constitution is safe, are wailing again because, according to the decision, the saloon has no constitutional rights to defend.

Moral: NO LEGISLATOR IN STATE OR NATION SHOULD OPPOSE ON CONSTITUTIONAL GROUNDS ANY BILL WHOSE PURPOSE HE APPROVES.

If a legislator wants to defeat a measure and is ashamed to give his REAL reasons, he can hide behind a constitutional objection—it is a very dignified and respectable objection. But you can generally embarrass the man who makes it by asking him for his REAL reason.

The courts—not the legislators—are authorized to decide constitutional questions. You can not possibly make a mistake by voting FOR an unconstitutional measure because the court will nullify it; but you can make a mistake by voting against a constitutional measure because the court can not decide a law constitutional until it is passed. If a measure is defeated there is no way of knowing whether it is constitutional or not.

It is time for the legislative representatives of the liquor interests, the railroads and the trusts to quit posing as constitutional lawyers and leave constitutional questions to the courts.

W. J. BRYAN.

Those farmers who have been showing signs of nervousness in the past when the railroad managers were conducting their campaign to show them how to increase their acre yields have been having the time of their lives the last few months suggesting to the railroad managers various means of increasing their production of freight cars to relieve the car shortage in the west. Some members of the Nebraska legislature went so far as to suggest that if the railroads were too busy jangling with the interstate commerce commission the state might build a few thousand cars for them.

But who is going to furnish this peace that the league now so much talked about proposes to enforce? The ancient injunction about first catching the hare before attempting any culinary experiment in which a rabbit figures seems to be pat right here.