

# Liquor Issue Must Be Met

In Nebraska, and in other states in which the question of prohibition is before the people, the democratic party will meet the issue frankly. Whenever the people are ready to act upon a question, parties, like individuals, must be brave enough to take sides and stake their success upon the righteousness of the position taken. This is especially true when a moral issue becomes paramount. In such a case to dodge is not only cowardly but disastrous. Personalities disappear when principles are involved and men become popular or unpopular according to the side they take. In every state in which the prohibition issue is before the people, prohibition democrats should put up a ticket for every state office and let the question of control be settled at the primary. If a majority of the party favor prohibition the party will benefit by the stand taken; if a majority of the party is against prohibition, then the party must bear the odium of allying itself with the liquor interests, which stand for everything harmful to the home, hurtful to society and corrupting in government.

Candidates for the United States senate and for congress must be willing to voice the sentiments of their constituents on the liquor question.

I hope that the prohibition question will not enter into the Presidential campaign next year, but it will necessarily come before the senators and members of congress to be elected next year and they should be in harmony with their constituents on this subject. No state or district can afford to be misrepresented by a senator or member of congress voting contrary to the wishes of those for whom he speaks.

The same is true of national committeemen. The state's representatives on the national committee should be in harmony with the views of the state; no man who takes the side of the liquor interests can fairly represent a prohibition side.

There need be no animosities, but the line should be clearly drawn wherever this question is an issue, so that the majority may everywhere rule.

W. J. BRYAN.

## CONGREGATIONALISTS AGAINST PREPAREDNESS

Resolutions against preparedness were adopted by the Congregationalists at their recent national assembly.

They were proposed by Dr. Jefferson of New York and seconded by Dr. Gladden of Ohio.

As first introduced they voiced the opposition of the church to the attempt which is now being made to stir the country into a frenzy of preparedness, and were intended as a protest against any increase in the appropriation for our army and navy.

In supporting the resolution Dr. Gladden said that never since the surrender at Yorktown has there been less danger of attack than today.

Some eastern delegates, however, objected to the resolution as introduced, and urged an amendment which very much weakens the resolution by opening the way to misconstruction and misinterpretation.

The amendment limited the preparedness to that necessary for defense, and this will be construed by jingoes to justify all they ask for, because all preparedness is asked for upon the theory that it will be used for defense only. But in actual practice this preparedness stimulates a war spirit which usually culminates in an aggressive attitude, and this aggressive attitude is excused upon the ground that aggression was necessary to prevent threatened attack.

It is necessary for peace organizations to exercise great care to prevent the introduction of these "weasel words" which suck the meaning out of well-intended declarations.

It would strengthen the fight which the people have to make against the powder and bullet trust, if all church organizations and other associations having the country's welfare at heart, would protest in positive terms against any increase in the appropriation for the army and navy beyond that which is annually appropriated.

Such a protest to be effective should express the belief that no new dangers threaten us and that the nation is not justified in preparedness beyond the present scale of expenditure.

## MR. BRYAN ON LEAVING WASHINGTON

Mr. Bryan gave out the following interview as he was leaving Washington:

"I came to Washington two years ago last March at the invitation of the President because he thought I could render a service to the government. I was more than pleased with the opportunities offered and am satisfied that the work done in the state department, especially in the negotiation of treaties and in cultivating better relations with Latin America, will stand. I resigned only when I became convinced that the opportunities for service were larger outside of the cabinet. On nearly every question I found it possible to agree with the President, and in those matters it has given me pleasure to second his efforts. In the few instances in which we could not agree, I have stated my views with frankness, and am willing to risk the judgment of the party and the country.

"The republicans must not put the differences between the President and myself in the same class with the differences between Mr. Taft and Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Taft and Mr. Roosevelt had personal differences which led to a division in the republican party. The differences between the President and myself are differences of principle and will not disturb the friendship between us. I rely upon my record during the last 25 years to prove my devotion to the democratic party and that devotion was never greater than today. My obligations to the party have constantly increased, and the six millions and a half of democrats who have three times voted for me will never have reason to doubt my loyalty to the principles which have made the democratic party a living force in politics for more than a century, and which, in spite of any mistakes it may make, will continue to make it the party of the common people and the champion of the rights of the masses."

## THE PROMOTERS DO NOT FIGHT

The Philadelphia Inquirer says:

"The fact is that war is generally promulgated by those who have the most to gain and least to lose in the conflict, whose own skins are safe, and who are enabled to drag after them all of their followers by holding up a 'sacred banner of patriotism' which is often false. Economic pressure has had much to do with war, but ambition has had more."

Quite right; and it might have added that the doctrine of frenzied preparedness is promulgated by those who have most to gain by army and navy contracts. They also use the "sacred banner of patriotism" to conceal the sordid pecuniary interests back of the propaganda.

Yes, it is wrong for a foreign-born citizen to allow his sympathy for a belligerent country to make him forget his duty to the land of his adoption, but is it not even worse for an American born citizen to become so engrossed in making money out of the war as to jeopardize the neutrality of the country of his birth? The memories of youth furnish a better excuse than the worship of mammon.

Congressman Gardner, the inventor of the big army and navy excitement, sedately remarks that the tentative program put out by members of the president's cabinet is an excellent start, but that it is merely the beginning of what should be done. Yet some folks still think there is no militarist group in the United States.

Suffrage lost in New Jersey by many thousands in spite of the open support given the state amendment by President Wilson. This is no measure of the president's influence in that state. It merely proves that the liquor interest is well dug in in the voting trenches there.

A number of our large dailies have allowed themselves to become asphyxiated by the poisonous gases discharged from the furnaces of the munition factories. Let us hope that the weekly papers will remain at a safe distance and thus escape.

And what of the unhyphenated Americans who, because they love money more than they love any country, are willing to plunge the United States into war for the profit on munitions?

If "necessity knows no law" this must be the school that the belligerent nations are now attending.

# The Note to Great Britain

The position taken by the United States in the note to Great Britain protesting against interference with neutral trade, is sound; our trade rights have been violated and the protest should be pushed with all vigor.

The peace treaty made with Great Britain on September 15, 1914, covers this case and provides for investigation by an international tribunal in case diplomatic representations fail. The matter, therefore, will proceed without excitement as the discussion of our protest to Germany would have done had we had a similar treaty with Germany, or had this government announced that the treaty plan would, if necessary, be resorted to.

If the treaty plan is resorted to and it fails to bring about a settlement of the dispute, then final settlement should be postponed until the war is over, for the same reasons which have been given in The Commoner for the postponement of settlements with other countries under similar circumstances. This government should insist upon its rights, but no resort should be had to force DURING THE PRESENT WAR. If it is necessary to resort to force at all it should be AFTER this war is over when we can have a war of our own—to enter into this war would be to take part in a war that belongs to everybody, and we could not take part in this war without being drawn into the settlement of disputes with which we have no connection.

W. J. BRYAN.

## DEFENDS PREPAREDNESS

The New York Telegram defends preparedness on the ground that it is "better to be safe than sorry."

If the editor of this paper will look up the records in the frontier sections, he will find that is exactly the theory upon which the pioneers acted when they made walking arsenals of themselves. If he will read the news items in the pioneer press, he will find that those who carried weapons were anything but safe.

He will also find that the standard of honor is identical with that which the jingoes have adopted as a national policy—a standard which puts a premium upon bloodshed and stigmatizes all peacefully inclined citizens as "mollycoddles."

## "THE DOCTOR KNOWS"

Every one has heard the story of the little boy who, when asked how he knew a neighbor was going to die, responded: "The doctor said he could not live 'till morning, and the doctor knows what kind of medicine he gave him." So these jingoes must think they know what kind of diplomacy we are going to use when they say that we can not keep out of war.

European diplomacy is conducted on the theory that it is a poor foreign office that can not find an excuse for doing what the war department wants it to do.

## A GOOD SUGGESTION

Chas. B. Chancellor, Parkersburg, W. Va., writes:

"Permit me to suggest that you ask your readers to mark editorials and other articles in The Commoner that appeal to them, or that they think would be of service and interest to their local community and to the democratic party in general, and hand the marked copy of The Commoner to their local editor, requesting them to publish each item marked some time during the month. By this method they can reach a great many more than by passing the paper on to some friend. Of course many of those known as "the big newspapers" are not friendly to Mr. Bryan and The Commoner, but if we could get the smaller and the local papers to copy more from The Commoner, it would not only do much good for the democratic party, but the country at large, and eventually it would have its influence with the larger and hostile press."