

The Commoner

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The Atlanta Constitution recently published an editorial entitled "Don't Want the Truth." Wonder if that explains why it treats its readers as it does.

The south and west are "safe and sane" on the subject of preparedness. They are in a position to rebuke the east for yielding to the military "craze."

The republicans do not ask much of the democrats—only that they admit the preparedness camel's nose into the tent. The republicans will see to it that the camel's body follows.

Mr. Roosevelt spends half his time demanding that we go to war with Germany in behalf of Belgium and the other half advocating the adoption of Germany's military system.

So, the New York Herald is going to bring out a candidate against Kitchin, is it? Well, that is interesting. Why does not Absentee Citizen Bennett, owner of the Herald, come back and run against Kitchin himself?

On another page will be found Savoyard's ridicule of one of the pipe dreams which the jingoes are using to scare the tax payers into spending money on preparedness. It is an insult to the intelligence of the voters.

"DEEDS, not WORDS," Mr. Roosevelt reiterates. And the deeds must have an edge like a sword and a point like a bayonet; they must have a hair-trigger and be explosive as gunpowder. Now, all ready; fire!

The number of republicans who firmly believe that Elihu Root is too old a man for the party to nominate for president has materially increased since New York defeated the Root constitution by so tremendous a majority.

The question before the American people is: Shall we adopt the European policy of matching war dollars with other nations and powers, or shall we cling to the century-old American policy which has made us mighty among the nations of the earth?

SCARE FOLLOWS SCARE

Do you notice how the scares are multiplying, and how each scare is bigger than the one before? First it was said that we might have war with some one nation; then it was said that we might have war with several; now we are told that the whole world may combine against us! And the scare season has just opened. They ought to have observed the speed limit—they have used up all their scare material, and will have to rely on their momentum from now on.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey," Where army-navy experts have their way.

America's Interest in Peace

"For some probably unreasonable but quite explicable cause Henry Ford's devotion to efforts for the restoration of peace in Europe is exasperating. All the fluttering American attempts to restore Europe to sanity lack the grace and unction which they seek to manifest.

"In our officious do good attitude we are put in about as absurd a pose as any sensible country could wish to avoid. The arrogance which assumes that this cloistered nation which seems to be secure from national ills and which is about one-tenth as secure as it thinks itself, has retained the only part of human wisdom, is insufferable.

"We treat the war as if it were a street brawl. Heroic people are surrendering everything they have for the sake of principles which they know ennoble them, and we, with never an ache or a pain and with only our war babies in the stock market to indicate that there is a ripple in the world's economy, stand upon the heights of our righteousness and beseech the quarreling peoples to be reasonable.

"If ever there was a time for a self-respecting nation to attend to its own business now is the time for the United States of America."

The above editorial appeared in the Chicago Tribune of November 28th. It represents the attitude of most of the metropolitan papers. The metropolitan papers almost invariably take the side of the special interests and at this time the manufacturers of munitions are specializing in war. We are now exporting as high as \$26,000,000 worth of ammunition per month, and selling it at an enormous profit. It is to the pecuniary advantage of these interests to keep the war going as long as possible, and it is to be expected that they will scoff at any suggestion of peace coming from any quarter. When we remember how indifferent most of the large newspapers have been to the welfare of the people of the United States, we can hardly be surprised that they are willing to aid those who oppose peace, because they want to coin into money the blood and tears of the people of other lands.

The readers of these papers can decide for themselves whether their editors, in ridiculing efforts in behalf of peace, are actuated by a desire to aid the munition manufacturers, or are simply ignorant of the interest which our nation, as a whole, has in the restoration of peace.

If the attitude of these metropolitan papers is due to ignorance it will be well for them to examine into the present situation and inquire whether it is not only our right but our duty to exert such influence as we may have to bring the conflict to an end.

The appeal might be made in the interests of humanity; the unparalleled suffering of an unprecedented war would touch the hearts of these metropolitan journalists if their hearts had not been hardened against the appeals which their own people make for justice in domestic matters, but is it nothing to them that our nation is suffering at the hands of both sides? Is it nothing to them that our citizens are being killed by the submarines of one side while our trade with neutral nations is being intercepted and suspended by the cruisers of the other side? Is it nothing that domestic questions are being pushed into the background to make way for war issues? Is it nothing to them that war taxes are being collected because the European conflict has put our fiscal system out of joint? Is it nothing to them that our nation is in constant danger of being drawn into this war with all the horrible consequences which would follow? And do they forget our obligations to the other neutral nations which, like ourselves, suffer without being to blame?

Is there any rule of logic, of international law or of morals that compels this nation to endure present suffering and invite future dangers without an effort to protect itself and aid other neutral nations?

The American people want peace at home and peace abroad, and they can not be bribed into silence by the fact that a few big corporations fatten on the woes which afflict Europe. The desire of our people for peace everywhere is quickened by the attempt which is now being made to use the animosities excited and the fears aroused by the war to coerce this nation

into vast expenditures for preparedness. Until the President feels justified in acting officially, the people of the United States will applaud and encourage any individual effort that may be put forth in the direction of peace. Where the purpose is laudable and where the result, if obtainable, is a thing to be desired the effort should meet with praise and sympathy rather than with coarse ridicule and abuse. W. J. BRYAN.

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The Chicago Tribune in its issue of November 25th, presents an interesting illustration of journalistic egotism. In its first column it administers a scathing rebuke to Miss Jane Addams and Mrs. Henry Ford for presuming to suggest that those in favor of action by our government looking to mediation, should wire the President their views. This according to the Tribune, is quite improper. "Would it not," asks the editor, "be well for them before dispatching their telegrams, to consider whether even the distinguished ladies they follow have given such clear evidence of the superiority of their knowledge and judgment respecting international relations over that of the President that their telegraphic appeal will be accepted either by the President or the general public as anything but an impertinence?"

Miss Addams is a world character, and has received respectful attention in the capitals of Europe as well as throughout the United States, and Mrs. Ford's name will give weight to her opinions. Yet the Tribune editor, name not given, reprimands these peace advocates, and on the same page proceeds to explain why this is not a proper time for peace to be proposed. The Tribune does not address its second editorial to the President, but contributes to the forming of that public opinion which must more or less influence all officials. In other words it presumes to advise, while criticising others for doing so.

By what logic does an editor, especially one with his identity concealed behind a corporation, claim superior right, authority, or weight to any other citizen? He does not speak for his readers—he speaks only for himself or for his paymaster. And yet the Tribune editor is a fair representative of the editors of the jingo press. They vociferously give instructions to the President every day, and at the same time question the right of the private citizen to express an opinion if that opinion happens to differ from the opinion announced by the representatives of the special interests. W. J. BRYAN.

WHY NOT WALLED CITIES?

Some one has discovered that, as the forts of New York only protect the city on the water side, an army might land in New Jersey and capture it from the land. Perish the thought. That will never do. We must build a wall around the city. And not to violate the doctrine of equal rights, must build a wall around each and every city, and then a wall around each house. If we are to be prepared we must take no chances.

The New York World speeds Mr. Ford on his mission with a farewell cartoon representing him "in the clouds" steering a Ford auto. It is to keep a multitude more poor soldiers from going in that direction that he is making his peace voyage.

Why not compel the ones who profit by militarism to pay the expense of such a system rather than shift the extra burden onto the farmers and wage-earners who are opposed to militarism and who are already paying more than their share of the expenses of the government.