

**NAVY LEAGUE PROPOSES DEBATE**

The Navy League asked Mr. Bryan to debate the question of preparedness, and suggested a man to represent their side. Below will be found Mr. Bryan's reply:

"Calumet Place, Washington, D. C. — Col. Robert M. Thompson, President Navy League, Washington, D. C. My Dear Sir: I am just in receipt of your favor of November 5th, and beg to say that I appreciate your invitation and heartily agree with you as to the desirability of a discussion of the policy of preparedness, and although my plans have been formed for a prolonged stay in the south, I am willing to interrupt my proposed rest long enough to discuss the subject of preparedness if your league will state its position, giving the amount of preparedness it thinks necessary, and then secure either ex-President Taft or ex-President Roosevelt to represent its side.

"These gentlemen, having occupied the presidency, might not feel justified in debating with one who has not held that high office, but as I have three times received more votes for the presidency than either of them received when they were last candidates, they might be willing to consider me in their class. I would not care to consider a debate with anyone less representative than they.

"If a debate is arranged, I think five places would be sufficient, and that they ought to be so selected as to give the country as well as the city an opportunity to supply an audience. I would suggest one in the eastern part of the north, one in the middle north, one in the far west, one in the south and one in the southwest, say in Texas.

"Very truly yours,  
W. J. BRYAN,

**THE SERMON IN THE MIRE**

Mr. Roosevelt in the New York Evening Mail says:

"The first and most vital need of this country is the military preparedness necessary in order that this nation shall be safe internationally, that we shall be able to protect our own coasts, to protect the Isthmian canal, Alaska and the islands where the American flag floats. **IN THE END THERE IS JUST ONE WAY FOR A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY TO MEET ITS OBLIGATIONS IN THIS MATTER, AND THAT IS BY UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING.**"

Here we have it; make a soldier out of every man. Turn the attention of ALL our boys from the victories of peace to the victories of war; make it their duty to learn the savage science of man-killing. This is the sermon in the mire which our blood-thirsty ex-president would substitute for the sermon on the mount, and some of our "eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" preachers like Lyman Abbott will shout, amen.

If there ever was a time when ministers owed it to their master to offer the Gospel of Christ as a cure for the war fever, they ought to hear the call now. The song of "Peace on earth, good will to men" rose above the tumult of a war period when Rome "from her seven hills" ruled the world. The Nazarene pointed mankind to a new way, and increasing numbers have accepted his invitation. Now we are asked to turn back to repudiate all that He ever taught, and adopt the false philosophy that permanent peace can be built on force and fear. Every church should speak out against this proposed return to barbarism.  
W. J. BRYAN.

The Wall Street Journal declares its one desire to be to have people "who do the real work of the country to consider the expediency of a radical change at Washington to remove the shackles from trade, finance and transportation." Big business can never give up its dream of running the government once more through some subservient republican.

Extra copies of The Commoner will be supplied in bundles by mail at 2 1-2c each if they are desired for free distribution.

**LaFollette Scores Interested "Patriots"**

**ENORMOUS PROFITS IN MANUFACTURE OF MUNITIONS**

Article	Purchase Price from Private Firms	Cost of Manufacture at Government plant	Profit for the Patriots
3.8-inch Common Shrapnel.....	\$ 17.50	\$ 7.94	\$ 9.56
31-second Combination Fuse.....	7.00	2.92	4.08
3-inch Finished Shrapnel Case.....	3.06	1.75	1.31
Gun Carriages for 3-inch Rifles.....	3,398.82	2,510.60	888.22
Caissons . . . . .	1,744.10	1,128.67	615.43
Order Ammunition . . . . .	2,879,904.00	1,900,064.00	979,840.00

If a man dares to intimate that he is unwilling to swallow the whole program for preparedness,— a big army, a big navy, big contracts for munitions of war,—that man is a fool or a coward or a traitor.

Who are the real patriots of the country? They are the glorious group of multimillionaires who are making such enormous profits out of the European war, as were never before realized in the same brief period since time began.

They are the Morgans, the Rockefellers, the Schwabs, the Garys, the du Ponts, and their prototypes, who are back of the thirty-eight corporations most benefited by war orders, the stocks of which have increased more than a thousand million dollars above their highest market value before the war.

They are the dollar-scarred heroes who organized the Navy league of the United States!

The high purpose of this noble organization is to boom big appropriations for a "sufficient number of superdreadnaughts" of the new winter design, the contracts for which must be signed up before the style changes; also standard armor plate, all blowholes of which are warranted to be carefully puttied up before delivery; also other munitions of war with latent defects guaranteed to remain latent until after acceptance by the government.

God bless the Navy league of the United States! How we thrill at the roll-call of those present when it was organized:

J. Pierpont Morgan; Thomas W. Lamont (Morgan); William H. Porter (Morgan); Henry P. Davidson (Morgan); Charles Steele (Morgan); Paul D. Cravath (Westinghouse Electric); Elbert H. Gary (United States Steel); Harry P. Whitney (Guaranty Trust Company—Agent Atlas Powder Company and Hercules Powder Company); S. H. P. Pell (International Nickel Company); Cornelius Vanderbilt (Lackawanna Steel Company); Ogden L. Mills (Lackawanna Steel Company); Frederick R. Coudert (National Surety Company); Francis L. Hine (Bankers' Trust Company); Daniel G. Read (Guarantee Trust Company—agent Atlas Powder Company, Hercules Powder Company, etc.); Frank A. Vanderlip (President National City Bank—Standard Oil); L. L. Clark (American Locomotive Company—European war orders!); Percy Rockefeller (sufficiently identified).

Shades of Lincoln! What a band of patriots with their business connections covering every financial and industrial center in the United States! Owing newspapers, periodicals, and magazines, and controlling through business relations the editorial good will of many others, they will be able to render powerful but disinterested aid in the great propaganda for preparedness which is now flooding the country at high tide as congress is about to meet!

At present these patriots are devoting their great talents to the making of public opinion for a big standing army and a big navy. This is most immediately necessary. They have been enlarging their manufacturing establishments and building many new plants to supply the urgent needs of the Allies at 800 per cent profit. But even the preparedness suckers of the country can readily see that there will come a day when the Allies will be unable to borrow any more American dollars with which to buy high priced American munitions of war.

In order to keep the enlarged and the newly constructed American plants running day and

night, and their great stock issues soaring steadily higher, we shall sorely need good fat government contracts with Uncle Sam.

Hence the necessity of preparing for preparedness!

We have some mean, small, sordid, unpatriotic people in this country so discourteous as to suggest that the government could save large sums of money building the battleships in our own ship-yards and manufacturing powder and shrapnel and guns in government-owned and operated arsenals and plants. But such people should be suppressed. They are never satisfied; a disloyal, low down lot of malcontents.

There is too much of this sort of thing already. These insurgent, rebellious meddlers have already gotten the government into the undignified position of interfering with the private business and the prosperity of patriots.

The government arsenal at Philadelphia is today making a 3.8-inch common shrapnel at a cost of only \$7.94, while at the same time it is paying private firms for the identical shrapnel exactly \$17.50. The government makes a 31-second combination fuse for \$2.92. For this same fuse it pays the private maker just \$7.00. The government makes a 3-inch finished shrapnel case at a cost of only \$1.75. It pays the private manufacturing concern \$3.06 for the same article. The government makes a gun carriage for a 3-inch rifled field gun at exactly \$2,510.60. It pays the private manufacturer \$3,398.82 for the same gun carriage. The government has manufactured caissons for \$1,128.67, and it has paid private concerns \$1,744.10 for the same caisson. The government filled one of its own orders for ammunition at its own arsenal which cost \$1,900,064. It saved on this order \$979,840, for it would have cost exactly \$2,879,904 if filled by private manufacturers.

This is an outrageous showing. It is a rank and dangerous interference with the private rights of the "best people." I state it in tabular form that it may shame the venal advocates of government-ownership.

Of course the government can build its battleships and manufacture its munitions of war in government-owned and operated shipyards and plants much better and more economically than it can hire it done by the Patriots.

But what of that! The government has plenty of money—or can get it out of the people. We need real Simon-pure-patriots like Morgan and Schwab, and Gary—even if they do come high.—Robert M. LaFollette, in LaFollette's Magazine.

If The Commoner is doing you a service by opposing militarism, you could be of service to yourself and to your neighbors by extending The Commoner's circulation in your neighborhood.